

PATHS TO KNOWLEDGE

HOW THE UNITED STATES
BECAME A NATION

FISKE

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HOW THE UNITED STATES BECAME A NATION

BY

JOHN FISKE

*With Illustrations
and Map*

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THE PERIOD OF WEAKNESS



EXPANSION MAP OF THE UNITED STATES

THE PERIOD OF WEAKNESS

Conditions of American progress. Hamilton's measures. Whisky insurrection. Indian War. Rise of parties. "Citizen" Genet. Jay's treaty. Troubles with France. Alien and sedition laws. Kentucky and Virginia resolutions. Death of Washington. Downfall of the Federalist party. The Louisiana Purchase. Exploration of Oregon. The Tripolitan War. Burr and Hamilton. Embargo.

The nation over which George Washington was called to preside in 1789 was a third-rate power, inferior in population and wealth to Holland, for example, and about on a level with Portugal or Denmark. The population, numbering less than four million, was thinly scattered through the thirteen states between the Atlantic and the Alleghenies, beyond which mountainous barrier a few hardy pioneers were making the beginnings of Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio. Roads were few and bad, none of the great rivers were bridged, mails were irregular. There were few manufactures. There were many traders and merchant

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seamen in the coast towns of the north, but the great majority of the people were farmers who lived on the produce of their own estates and seldom undertook long journeys. Hence the different parts of the country knew very little about each other, and entertained absurd prejudices; and the sentiment of union between the states was extremely weak. East of the Alleghenies the red man had ceased to be dangerous, but tales of Indian massacre still came from regions no more remote than Ohio and Georgia. By rare good fortune and consummate diplomacy the United States had secured, at the peace of 1783, all the territory as far as the Mississippi river, but all the vast regions beyond, together with the important city of New Orleans at its mouth, belonged to Spain, the European power which most cordially hated us. The only other power which had possessions in North America was England, from which we had lately won our independence. The feeling entertained toward us in England was one of mortification and chagrin, accompanied by a hope that

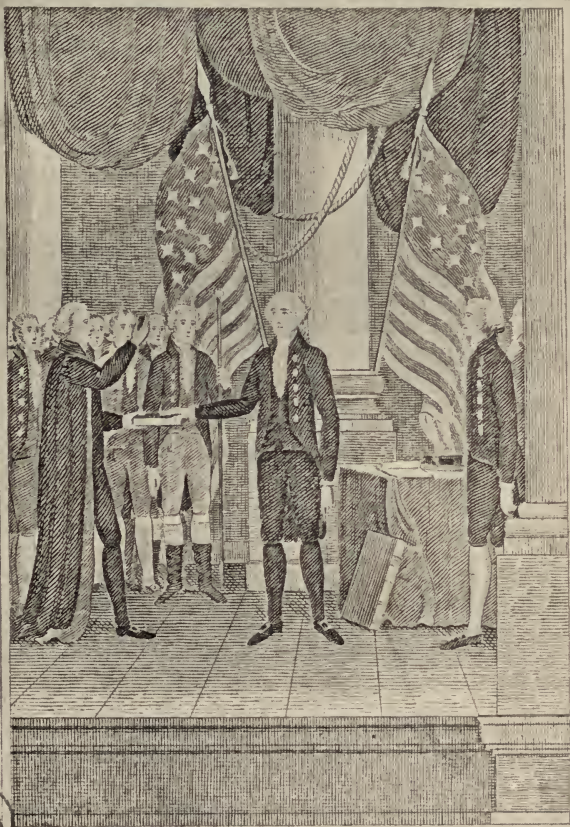
our half-formed Union would fall in pieces and its separate states be driven by disaster to beg to be taken back into the British empire. The rest of Europe knew little about the United States and cared less.

This country, however, which seemed so insignificant beside the great powers of Europe, contained within itself the germs of an industrial and political development far greater than anything the world had ever seen. The American population was settled upon a territory much more than capable of supporting it. The natural resources of the country were so vast as to create a steady demand for labor far greater than ordinary increase of population could supply. This is still the case, and for a long time will continue to be the case. It is this simple economic fact which has always been at the bottom of the wonderful growth of the United States. But it was very necessary that the nation should be provided with such a government as would enable it to take full advantage of this fact. It was necessary *first*, that the Federal government

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should be strong enough to preserve peace at home and make itself respected abroad; *secondly*, that local self-government should be maintained in every part of the Union; *thirdly*, that there should be absolute free trade between the states. These three great ends our Federal Constitution has secured. The requisite strength in the central government was, indeed, not all acquired in a moment. It took a second war with England in 1812–1815 to convince foreign nations that the American flag could not be insulted with impunity; and it took the terrible Civil War of 1861–1865 to prove that our government was too strong to be overthrown by the most formidable domestic combination that could possibly be brought against it. The result of both these wars has been to diminish the probable need for further wars on the part of the United States. In spite of these and other minor contests, our Federal Constitution for a century kept the American Union in such profound peace as was never seen before in any part of the earth since men began to live upon its surface.

INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT WASHINGTON.



INAUGURATION OF WASHINGTON AS PRESIDENT

From a print published in 1820

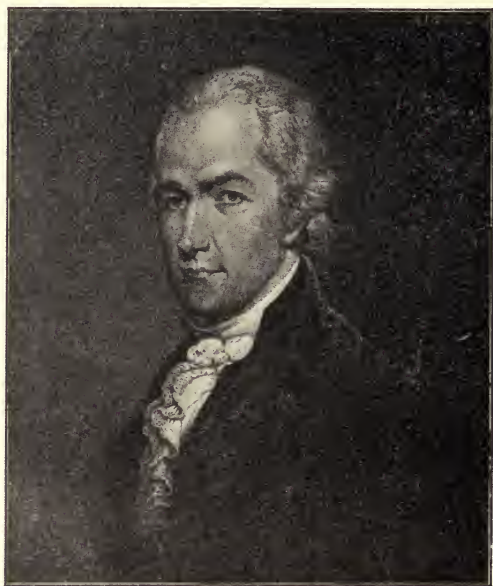


Local self-government and free trade within the limits of the Union were not interfered with. As a result, we were able to profit largely by our natural advantages, so that the end of our first century of national existence found us the strongest and richest nation in the world.

For these blessings, in so far as they are partly the work of wise statesmanship, a large share of our gratitude is due to the administration of George Washington. The problem before that administration was to organize the government upon the lines laid down in the Constitution, so that its different departments would work smoothly together. This difficult work was so successfully accomplished that little change has been found necessary from that day to this. The success was mainly due to the organizing genius of Hamilton in the cabinet, assisted by the skill and tact of Madison as leading member of the House of Representatives. Though these great men were often opposed to each other in regard to special measures, their work all tended toward

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a common result. Hamilton, as Secretary of the Treasury, occupied the most important



A Hamilton

position in Washington's cabinet. The first thing to be done was to restore the credit of the United States, which had been completely

ruined during the Revolutionary War and the troubled years which followed it. Hamilton proposed three measures: *first*, that the government should assume the foreign debt of the confederation, and pay it in full; *secondly*, that the domestic debt, which seemed to have been virtually repudiated, should likewise be assumed and paid; *thirdly*, that the debts of the separate states should also be assumed and paid by the Federal government. The first of these measures met with no opposition. The second was opposed on the ground that it would only benefit speculators who had bought up United States securities at a discount; but Hamilton's friends argued, Let us teach people who hold government securities hereafter not to sell them at a discount; and so the measure was carried. The third measure met with violent opposition, for many people thought the Federal government had no legal power to assume a state debt. No doubt it was a somewhat heroic measure. There was a fierce and bitter fight over it, which at last was only settled by what in political

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slang is called "logrolling," or an exchange of favors. The site for a Federal capital was to be selected. The northern people generally wished to have it not farther south than the Delaware river, while the southerners were determined not to have it farther north than the Potomac. Jefferson, who was Washington's Secretary of State, was prominent in urging the southern view of this question, as well as in opposing the assumption of the state debts. The two controversies were settled by a bargain between Jefferson and Hamilton, in which the former withdrew his opposition to assumption, while the latter used his influence with the Federalist party in favor of the Potomac as a site for the Federal capital. The assumption of state debts was a master stroke of policy. All those persons to whom any state owed money were at once won over to the support of the Federal government. There were many such persons, and many of them were wealthy and powerful. All these now felt a common interest in upholding the national credit, which, through

these wise and vigorous measures of Hamilton, was soon completely restored.

In order to carry out these measures, money was necessary, and this must be raised by Federal taxation. There were two ways in which this could be done, either by internal taxes or by customhouse duties. The latter method was mainly resorted to, because it is more indirect, and while it takes vastly more money out of people's pockets, they are usually too dull to realize this as they would in the case of a direct tax. When a tax is wrapped up in the extra fifty cents paid to a merchant for a yard of foreign cloth, it is so effectually hidden that most people do not know it is there. Hence this method of taxation is dangerous; it enables taxes to be laid for the benefit of greedy manufacturers, and thus furtively takes from the people vast sums of money which never get into the treasury. This sort of thing is called "protection," which is so pleasing a word that it makes many people loath to see taxes reduced. In Hamilton's time these dangers were not so well understood

as they are now. But the most indirect and covert method of taxation was the one that must needs be adopted, because people had not been used to paying taxes except to their town, county, and state governments, and would be likely to rebel against taxes too directly demanded for the Federal treasury.

An instance of this was furnished in 1794 by the tax on whisky. The settlers in the mountains of Pennsylvania and Virginia had long since found that it cost more to carry their corn and wheat to market than they could sell it for, and accordingly they distilled it into whisky. When Congress now laid a tax upon whisky, they grumbled, and when the revenue officers called upon them, they refused to pay the tax and threatened to take up arms. It was necessary to show people that such proceedings would not be allowed; and Washington summarily suppressed the insurrection by sending to the disaffected region an army of sixteen thousand men,—a force so large as to make the mere idea of resistance ridiculous.

Then, as ordinarily, the western frontier was the scene of troubles with the Indians. This frontier was then near the Wabash river. In



Anthony Wayne

1790 the red men won a great victory over General Harmar near the site of Fort Wayne, and in the following year they inflicted a terrible

defeat upon General St. Clair near the head waters of the Wabash. They now tried to make a treaty which should exclude white settlers from this region. But in 1794, in a fierce battle near the site of Toledo, they were totally defeated by General Wayne, and were forced to make a treaty by which they were moved farther west.

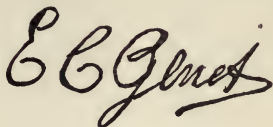
The divisions between political parties had now become strongly marked. People were first divided into two great national parties in the autumn of 1787, when the question was whether the Federal Constitution should be ratified by the states. These first parties were called Federalist and Anti-Federalist, names which explain themselves. The adoption of the Constitution was a decisive defeat for the Anti-Federalist party; the financial measures of Hamilton completed its destruction. Parties then became divided in the only sound and healthy way possible in a free country, namely, into those who wished to extend, and those who wished to limit, the powers of government. The former kept the name of

Federalists, the second received the name of Democratic-Republicans. They preferred to be called Republicans, while their enemies tried to call them Democrats, an epithet which was then supposed to convey a stigma. Until about 1825-1830 the correct name for this party is Republican; after that time it is right to speak of it as the Democratic party. The reader must bear in mind the awkward fact that in American politics at the beginning of the century the name Republican meant exactly the opposite to what it means now. So far as the word goes, it might as well have been applied to one party as the other; American party names have but little descriptive significance anyway. But at the outset the name Democrat really had a meaning. It was properly applied to those who wished to increase the direct participation of the people in the government, to abolish all remnants of privilege, and to extend the suffrage which at that time was more or less limited in all the states. The founder and greatest leader of the Republican party, Thomas Jefferson, was before all

men a Democrat. In the highest intellectual qualities he was inferior to Hamilton and Madison; but he excelled them in a certain generosity of intelligence which enabled him to see that no form of government can be successful in the long run, if it leaves any class of people with the feeling that they are forcibly deprived of a share in the management of things. Jefferson's opponent, the leader of the Federalists, was Hamilton. Between the two parties Washington pursued a national policy of his own, though his sympathies were mainly with the Federalists.

A firm hand and indomitable will like Washington's were needed at this time, for the foreign sympathies of our two parties were so strong that we were continually running the risk of getting dragged into war. Party quarrels were concerned even more with European politics than with American affairs. The French Revolution broke out in the first year of Washington's first term (1789); by the second year of his second term it had reached its most frightful period. France and England

were now at war. The Republicans realized the good in the French Revolution so far as to sympathize with it in spite of its horrors. The Federalists sympathized with England as the upholder of law and order in Europe. Party strife has never run so high, except just before our Civil War. The French expected us to help them in their war against England, and in 1793



AUTOGRAPH OF GENET

they sent over a minister to the United States to persuade us to do so. This man, who was called "Citizen" Genet, behaved as if he owned the United States. He tried, without waiting for permission, to fit out privateers in American ports, and thus drag us into war with England. Many Republicans were disposed to uphold him in everything, but his insolence presently disgusted his own supporters. Washington sternly checked his proceedings, and at length

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complained of him to the French government, which thought it best to recall him.



John Jay —

In 1795 Washington had one of his hardest trials. Since the peace of 1783 England had treated us as shabbily as she knew how. She

still held Detroit and other frontier forts, in disregard of the treaty, and it was believed that the British commandants had secretly helped the Indians on the Wabash. British war ships, moreover, were in the habit of impressing American seamen and seizing American ships bound to or from French ports. War might easily grow out of this, and to prevent such a calamity Washington sent John Jay on a special mission to England. Jay negotiated a treaty which only partially secured the American claims, but Washington's government wisely adopted it as preferable to war. There was great excitement everywhere; Hamilton was stoned on the street, and scurrilous newspapers heaped abuse upon Washington, calling him "the stepfather of his country."

As Washington refused to be a candidate for a third term, the election of 1796 was warmly contested by the two parties. John Adams, the Federalist candidate, was elected over Jefferson, who, according to the rule at that time, became Vice President, as second

on the list. This was an unwise rule, since under it the death of the President might reverse the result of the election. The administration of John Adams was chiefly occupied with disputes with France. The French were indignant at our attitude of neutrality, and treated us with intolerable insolence. Under Washington's administration, Gouverneur Morris, a Federalist, had been for some time minister to France, but as he was greatly disliked by the gang of anarchists that then misruled that country, Washington had recalled him and sent James Monroe, a Republican, in his place. Monroe was instructed to try to reconcile the French to Jay's treaty, but instead of this he encouraged them to hope that the treaty would not be ratified. Washington accordingly recalled him and sent Cotesworth Pinckney, a Federalist, in his place. The French government were so enraged at the ratification of Jay's treaty that they would not allow Pinckney to stay in Paris, and at the same time decrees were passed discriminating against American commerce.

The first act of Mr. Adams was to call an extra session of Congress to consider how war with France was to be avoided. A special commission was sent to Paris, but the



John Adams

government there would not receive the commissioners. Prince Talleyrand had the impudence to send secret emissaries to them to demand a large sum of money as blackmail,

to be paid to several members of the French government on condition of their stopping the outrages upon American commerce. The indignant envoys sent home to America an account of this infamous proposal, and Mr. Adams laid the dispatches before Congress, substituting the letters X. Y. Z. for the names of Talleyrand's emissaries. Hence these papers have ever since been known as the

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "C. P. De Talleyrand". The script is cursive and elegant, with a large, stylized initial "C".

AUTOGRAPH OF TALLEYRAND

“X. Y. Z. dispatches.” They were published, and aroused intense excitement on both sides of the Atlantic. The United States prepared for war. For the moment the Republican party seemed overwhelmed. From all quarters went up the war cry, “Millions for defense; not one cent for tribute.” A few excellent frigates were built; an army was raised, and Washington was placed in command with the rank of lieutenant general. It was during this excitement that the song



TRUXTUN MEDAL

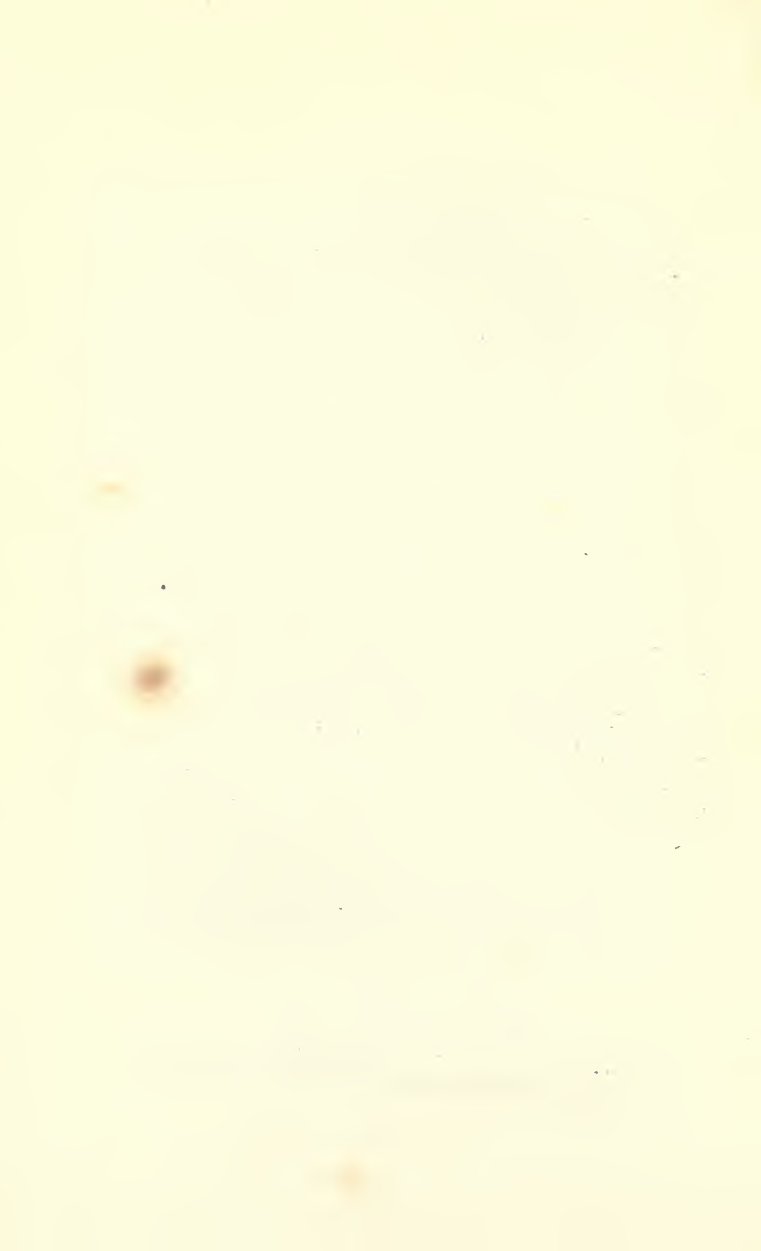
of "Hail Columbia" was published. For about a year there was really war with France, though it was never declared. In February, 1799, Captain Truxtun, in the frigate *Constellation*, defeated and captured the French frigate *L'Insurgente* near the island of St. Christopher. In February, 1800, the same gallant officer in a desperate battle destroyed the frigate *La Vengeance*, which was much his superior in strength of armament. The French, seeing our warlike attitude, had already, early in 1799, grown somewhat more civil. Talleyrand tried to disavow the X.Y.Z. affair, and made conciliatory overtures to Vans Murray, the American minister at The

Hague. President Adams wisely decided to meet the French government halfway, and accordingly, in spite of the fiercely warlike temper of the Federalist party, he appointed Vans Murray minister to France, and sent over two commissioners to aid him in adjusting the difficulties. When these envoys reached Paris, they found Napoleon Bonaparte at the head of the government, and succeeded in settling everything amicably. The course of John Adams, in resisting popular clamor and making peace with France, deserves our highest praise. It was one of the noblest actions of his life, but it prevented his reelection to the presidency. For a long time there had been intense jealousy and dislike between Adams and the other great Federalist leader, Hamilton; and on the occasion of the French mission these antagonisms bore fruit in a quarrel between Mr. Adams and his cabinet, and presently in a split in the Federalist party.

Another affair contributed largely to the downfall of the Federalist party. In 1798, during the height of the popular fury against



Napoleon



France, the Federalists in Congress presumed too much upon their strength, and passed the famous alien and sedition acts. By the first of these acts aliens were rendered liable to summary banishment from the United States at the sole discretion of the President; and any alien who should venture to return from such banishment was liable to imprisonment for life. By the sedition act, any scandalous or malicious writing against the President or Congress was liable to be dealt with in the United States courts and punished by fine and imprisonment. This act was unconstitutional, for it was an infringement upon freedom of the press; and both acts aroused more widespread indignation than any others that have ever passed in Congress.

From the southern Republicans the alien and sedition laws called forth a vigorous remonstrance. A series of resolutions, drawn up by Madison, was adopted in 1798 by the Legislature of Virginia, and a similar series, still more pronounced in character, and drawn up by Jefferson, was adopted in the same

year by the Legislature of Kentucky. The Virginia resolutions asserted with truth that, in adopting the Federal Constitution, the states had surrendered only a limited portion of their powers ; and went on to declare that, whenever the Federal government should exceed its constitutional authority, it was the business of the state governments to interfere and pronounce such action unconstitutional. Accordingly, by these resolutions, Virginia declared the alien and sedition laws unconstitutional, and invited the other states to join in the declaration. Not meeting with a favorable response, Virginia renewed these resolutions the next year.

There was nothing necessarily seditious, or tending toward secession, in the Virginia resolutions ; but the attitude assumed in them was uncalled for on the part of any state, inasmuch as there existed, in the Federal Supreme Court, a tribunal competent to decide upon the constitutionality of acts of Congress. But the Kentucky resolutions went further. They declared that our Federal Constitution

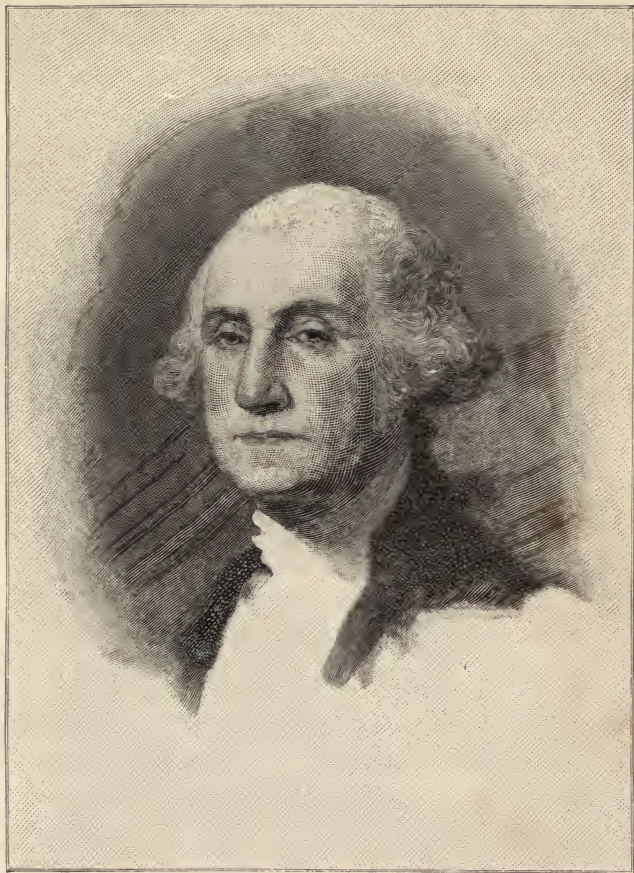
was a compact to which the several states were the one party and the Federal government was the other, and each party must decide for itself as to when the compact was infringed, and as to the proper remedy to be adopted. When the resolutions were repeated in 1799, a clause was added which went still further and mentioned "nullification" as the suitable remedy, and one which any state might employ. This was venturing upon dangerous ground; for if it were once admitted that a state might take it upon itself to prevent the execution of a United States law within its own borders, a long step would be made toward admitting the right of secession. In after times secessionists often appealed to the Kentucky resolutions; but their doctrine was never generally admitted, though different states, north and south, under the influence of strong excitement, seemed at times ready to act upon it.

When appointed to command the army, July 3, 1798, Washington accepted the commission upon the express understanding that

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he was not to be called into the field until an emergency should arise which should require his presence. During the following year he continued to superintend from a distance the concerns of the army, as his ample and minute correspondence manifests; and he was at the same time earnestly endeavoring to bring the affairs of his rural domain into order. A sixteen years' absence from home, with short intervals, had deranged them considerably, so that it required all the time he could spare from the usual occupations of life to bring them into tune again. It was a period of incessant activity and toil, therefore, both mental and bodily. He was for hours in his study occupied with his pen, and for hours on horseback, riding the rounds of his extensive estate, visiting the various farms, and superintending and directing the works in operation. All this he did with unfailing vigor, though now in his sixty-seventh year.

Occasional reports of the sanguinary conflict that was going on in Europe would reach him in the quiet groves of Mount Vernon and



GEORGE WASHINGTON

After the painting by Stuart



awaken his solicitude. "A more destructive sword," said he, "was never drawn, at least in modern times, than this war has produced. It is time to sheathe it and give peace to mankind." A private letter written to the Secretary of War bespeaks his apprehensions: "I have for some time past viewed the political concerns of the United States with an anxious and painful eye. They appear to me to be moving by hasty strides to a crisis; but in what it will result, that Being who sees, foresees, and directs all things, alone can tell. The vessel is afloat, or very nearly so, and considering myself as a passenger only, I shall trust to the mariners (whose duty it is to watch) to steer it into a safe port."

Winter had set in, December, 1799, with occasional wind and rain and frost, yet Washington still kept up his active round of indoor and outdoor occupations, as his diary records. He was in full health and vigor, dined out occasionally, and had frequent guests at Mount Vernon, and, as usual, was part of every day in the saddle, going the

rounds of his estate, and, in his military phraseology, "visiting the outposts."

He had recently walked with his favorite nephew, Lawrence Lewis, about the grounds, showing the improvements he intended to



THE TOMB OF WASHINGTON

After an old sketch

make, and had especially pointed out the spot where he purposed building a new family tomb, the old one being damaged by the roots of trees which had overgrown it and caused it to leak. "This change," said he, "I shall make the first of all, for I may require it before the rest."

“When I parted from him,” adds Lewis, “he stood on the steps of the front door, where he took leave of myself and another. . . . It was a bright frosty morning; he had taken his usual ride, and the clear, healthy flush on his cheek and his sprightly manner brought the remark from both of us that we had never seen the general look so well. I have sometimes thought him decidedly the handsomest man I ever saw; and when in a lively mood, so full of pleasantry, so agreeable to all with whom he associated, that I could hardly realize he was the same Washington whose dignity awed all who approached him.”

For some time past Washington had been occupied in digesting a complete system on which his estate was to be managed for several succeeding years, specifying the cultivation of the several farms, with tables designating the rotations of the crops. It occupied thirty folio pages, and was executed with that clearness and method which characterized all his business papers. This was finished on the

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10th of December, and was accompanied by a letter of that date to his manager or steward. It is a valuable document, showing the soundness and vigor of his intellect at this advanced stage of life, and the love of order that reigned



MOUNT VERNON

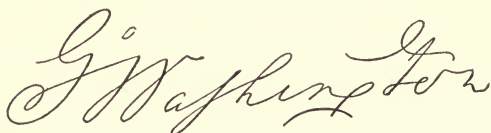
From a print published in 1798

throughout his affairs. “My greatest anxiety,” said he, on a previous occasion, “is to have all these concerns in such a clear and distinct form, that no reproach may attach itself to me when I have taken my departure for the land of spirits.” It was evident, however,

that full of health and vigor, he looked forward to his long-cherished hope, — the enjoyment of a serene old age in this home of his heart.

According to his diary, the morning on which these voluminous instructions to his steward were dated was clear and calm, but the afternoon was lowering. The next day (11th), he notes that there was wind and rain, and “at night *a large circle round the moon.*” The morning of the 12th was overcast. That morning he wrote to Hamilton, heartily approving of a plan for a military academy, which the latter had submitted to the Secretary of War. About ten o’clock he mounted his horse and rode out as usual to make the rounds of his estate. The ominous ring round the moon, which he had observed on the preceding night, proved a fatal portent. “About one o’clock,” he notes, “it began to snow, soon after to hail, and then turned to a settled cold rain.” Having on an overcoat, he continued his ride without regarding the weather, and did not return to the house until after

three. His secretary, Tobias Lear, approached him with letters to be franked, that they might be taken to the post office in the evening. Washington franked the letters, but observed that the weather was too bad to send a servant out with them. Mr. Lear perceived that snow was hanging from his hair, and expressed fears that he had got wet; but he replied, No, that his greatcoat had

A cursive handwritten signature of George Washington, written in dark ink. The signature is elegant and fluid, with the first letter 'G' being particularly large and ornate. The name 'Washington' is clearly legible in the cursive script.

AUTOGRAPH OF WASHINGTON

kept him dry. As dinner had been waiting for him he sat down without changing his clothes. "In the evening," writes his secretary, "he appeared as well as usual."

On the following morning the snow was three inches deep and still falling, which prevented him from taking his usual ride. He complained of a sore throat, and had evidently taken cold the day before. In the afternoon the weather cleared up, and he went out on

the grounds between the house and the river to mark some trees which were to be cut down. A hoarseness which had hung about him through the day grew worse towards night, but he made light of it.

He was very cheerful in the evening as he sat in the parlor with Mrs. Washington and Mr. Lear, amusing himself with the papers which had been brought from the post office. When he met with anything interesting or entertaining, he would read it aloud as well as his hoarseness would permit, or he listened and made occasional comments while Mr. Lear read the debates of the Virginia Assembly. On retiring to bed, Mr. Lear suggested that he should take something to relieve the cold. "No," replied he; "you know I never take anything for a cold. Let it go as it came."

In the night he was taken extremely ill with ague and difficulty of breathing. Between two and three o'clock in the morning he awoke Mrs. Washington, who would have risen to call a servant; but he would not

permit her, lest she should take cold. At day-break, when the servant woman entered to make a fire, she was sent to call Mr. Lear. He found the general breathing with difficulty, and hardly able to utter a word intelligibly.

His old friend, Dr. Craik, soon arrived, and two other physicians were called in. Various remedies were tried, but without avail. In the course of the afternoon he appeared to be in great pain and distress from the difficulty of breathing, and frequently changed his posture. Between five and six o'clock he was assisted to sit up in his bed. "I feel I am going," said he; "I thank you for your attentions, but I pray you will take no more trouble about me; let me go off quietly; I cannot last long."

Between ten and eleven o'clock he expired without a struggle or a sigh.

On opening his will, which he had handed to Mrs. Washington shortly before death, it was found to have been carefully drawn up by himself in the preceding July; and by an act in conformity with his whole career, one

of its first provisions directed the emancipation of his slaves on the decease of his wife. It had long been his earnest wish that the slaves held by him *in his own right* should receive their freedom during his life, but he had found it would be attended with insuper-



MRS. WASHINGTON

able difficulties on account of their intermixture by marriage with the “dower negroes,” whom it was not in his power to manumit under the tenure by which they were held. With provident benignity he also made provision in his will for such as were to receive their freedom under this device, but who, from age, bodily infirmities, or infancy, might be

unable to support themselves, and he expressly forbade, under any pretense whatsoever, the sale or transportation out of Virginia of any slave of whom he might die possessed. Though born and educated a slaveholder, this



MOUNT VERNON

From a recent photograph

was all in consonance with feelings, sentiments, and principles which he had long entertained. In a letter to Mr. John Mercer, in September, 1786, he writes: "I never mean, unless some particular circumstances should

compel me to it, to possess another slave by purchase, it being among my first wishes to see some plan adopted by which slavery in this country may be abolished by law." And eleven years afterwards, in August, 1797, he writes to his nephew, Lawrence Lewis, in a letter which we have had in our hands, "I wish from my soul that the Legislature of this state could see the policy of a gradual abolition of slavery. It might prevent much future mischief."

A deep sorrow spread over the nation on hearing that Washington was no more. Congress, which was in session, immediately adjourned for the day. The next morning it was resolved that the Speaker's chair be shrouded with black; that the members and officers of the House wear black during the session; and that a joint committee of both houses be appointed to consider the most suitable manner of doing honor to the memory of the man "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his fellow-citizens." Public testimonials of grief and reverence were

displayed in every part of the Union. Nor were these sentiments confined to the United States. When the news of Washington's death reached England, Lord Bridport, who had command of a British fleet of nearly sixty sail of the line, lying at Torbay, lowered his flag half-mast, every ship following the example; and Bonaparte, First Consul of France, on announcing his death to the army, ordered that black crape should be suspended from all the standards and flags throughout the public service for ten days.

The character of Washington may want some of those poetical elements which dazzle and delight the multitude, but it possessed fewer inequalities and a rarer union of virtues than perhaps ever fell to the lot of any other man, — prudence, firmness, sagacity, moderation, an overruling judgment, an immovable justice, courage that never faltered, patience that never wearied, truth that disdained all artifice, magnanimity without alloy. It seems as if Providence had endowed him in a preëminent degree with the qualities

requisite to fit him for the high destiny he was called upon to fulfill, — to conduct a momentous revolution which was to form an era in the history of the world, and to inaugurate a new and untried government, which, to use his own words, was to lay the foundation “for the enjoyment of much purer civil liberty and greater public happiness than have hitherto been the portion of mankind.”

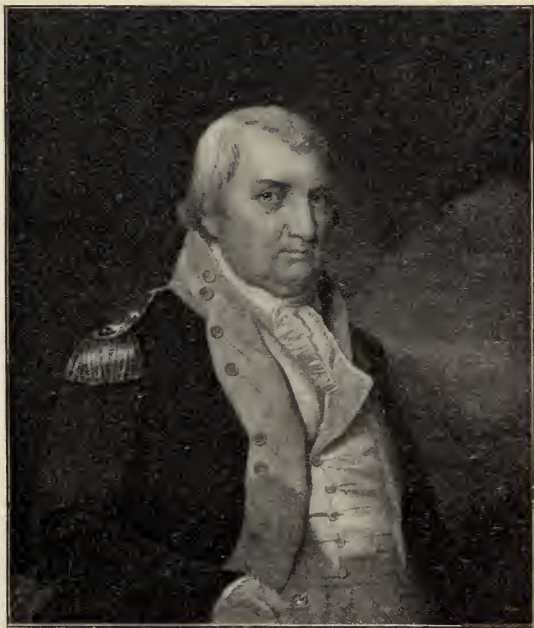
The fame of Washington stands apart from every other in history, shining with a truer luster and a more benignant glory. With us his memory remains a national property, where all sympathies throughout our widely extended and diversified empire meet in unison. Under all dissensions and amid all the storms of party his precepts and example speak to us from the grave with a paternal appeal; and his name — by all revered — forms a universal tie of brotherhood, — a watchword of our Union.

“It will be the duty of the historian and the sage of all nations,” writes the eminent British statesman, Lord Brougham, “to let

no occasion pass of commemorating this illustrious man ; and until time shall be no more, will a test of the progress which our race has made in wisdom and virtue, be derived from the veneration paid to the immortal name of Washington."

By the spring of 1800 it became apparent that the Republicans were steadily gaining ground. In April the New York state election went against the Federalists. Soon after this the President dismissed some of his cabinet officers who were too friendly to Hamilton, and the break in the Federalist party became irreparable. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney was the second choice of that party for President, and the Hamiltonians tried to divert votes to him from Adams. The election was very close. Of the electoral votes seventy-three were for Jefferson, seventy-three for Aaron Burr, sixty-five for Adams, sixty-four for Pinckney, and one for Jay. As there was no name highest on the list, it was left to the House of Representatives to decide between the two highest candidates. Intrigues followed. Some of the

Federalists wished to elect Burr instead of their archenemy Jefferson ; but Hamilton used

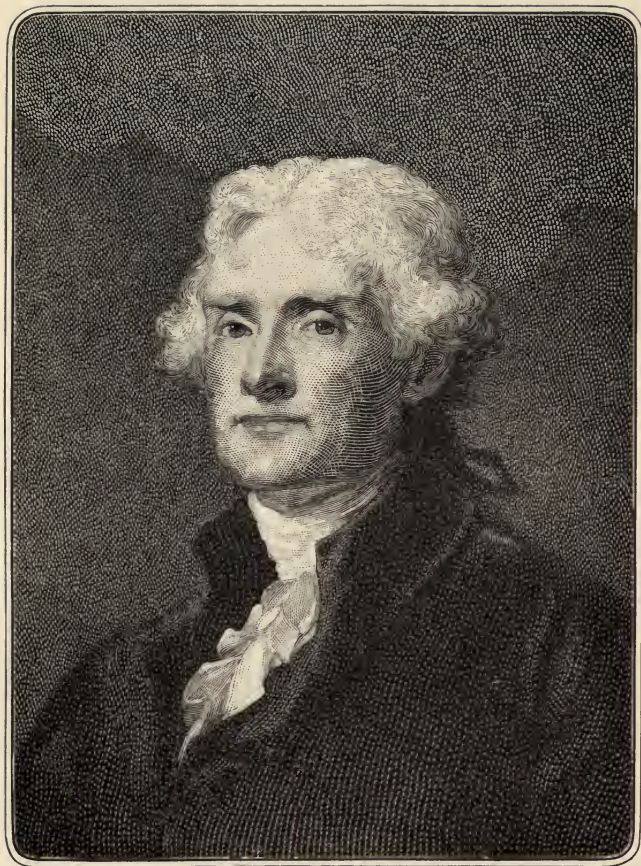


Charles Cotesworth Pinckney,

all his influence against such a scheme, and at last, on February 17, 1801, Jefferson was elected by the House. In another fortnight

the government would have been left without any executive head. There were fears of anarchy and threats of civil war. To provide against the recurrence of such a difficulty, the twelfth amendment to the Constitution, adopted in 1804, changed the method of conducting presidential elections to that which has ever since been employed.

The inauguration of Jefferson was the first that took place in the city of Washington, whither the Federal government had been removed from Philadelphia in 1800. The national capital, which is now fast becoming one of the finest cities in the world, was then a wretched village in the woods. Many of the Federalists believed that the election of Jefferson would entail speedy ruin upon the country ; but such fears proved groundless, as usual. His first administration was marked by national prosperity. It coincided with the only interval of peace between England and France during the Napoleonic period, and for the moment we were unmolested by those powers. There was no serious change in the



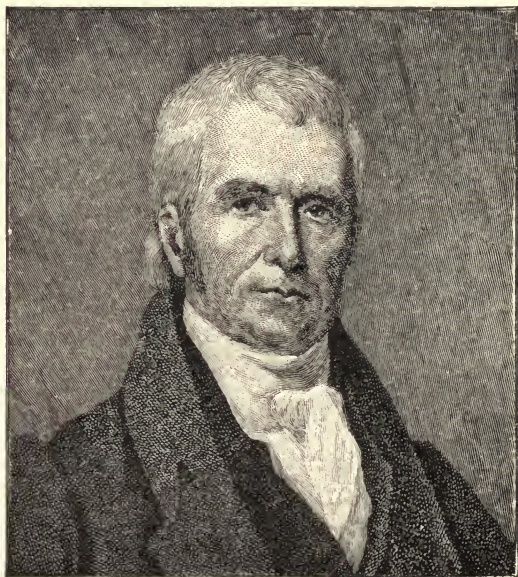
THOMAS JEFFERSON

After the painting by Stuart

administration of our government. Jefferson pardoned those persons who had been imprisoned under the alien and sedition laws, and the Republican House of Representatives impeached Judge Chase of Maryland for alleged harshness in conducting trials under those laws; but he was acquitted by a Republican Senate. Very few removals from office were made for political reasons. The Supreme Court, under the lead of Chief Justice John Marshall, remained Federalist in complexion, and during the next quarter of a century did work of imperishable renown in strengthening and interpreting the Constitution. The Republicans had become reconciled to many Federalist ideas which at first they had condemned, and now that the government was in their own hands they were not so jealous of its powers.

This was shown in what was incomparably the greatest event of Jefferson's administration. The population of the United States was rapidly increasing and was beginning to pour into the Mississippi valley. In 1802

the state of Ohio was admitted into the Union; Mississippi and Indiana were already organized as territories; and a growing interest



Monroe

was felt in the western country. It was now learned that France had just acquired by treaty from Spain the territory of Louisiana,

so that the mouth of the Mississippi river and all the vast region to the west of it as far as the Rocky mountains had passed into the hands of an active and aggressive European power. Napoleon had, indeed, acquired this territory with a vague intention of regaining the ascendancy in America, which France had lost in the Seven Years' War; but in 1803 the prospect of renewed war with England made him change his mind. With her control of Canada and her superior fleet England might easily wrest from his grasp the two ends of the Mississippi river and defeat his schemes. It seemed better to put Louisiana out of England's reach by selling it to the United States; and accordingly Jefferson found no difficulty in buying it of Napoleon for fifteen million dollars. By this great stroke the area of the United States was more than doubled. Before 1803 it was 827,844 square miles; Jefferson's purchase added to it about 900,000 square miles, out of which have since been formed the states of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Kansas,

Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming; also Indian Territory and Oklahoma, and a great part of the states of Minnesota and Colorado. The effect of this great acquisition of territory, by such an active and prosperous people as the Americans, was to insure them the ultimate control of the continent without the need of any foreign warfare worth mentioning. It presently set us free for an indefinite length of time from European complications; but, on the other hand, it added new and formidable features to the rivalry between the free states and the slave states.

In making this purchase, which was destined to exercise such profound influence upon the history of the United States, Jefferson did not pretend that he had constitutional authority for what he was doing. The act was so clearly for the public good that he assumed the responsibility, trusting that a new constitutional amendment would justify it; but he was so completely upheld by public sentiment that no such elaborate step was

thought necessary ; the universal acquiescence was enough.

As an expander of American dominion, Jefferson did not stop here. The region beyond



Meriwether Lewis

the Rocky mountains and north of California was then quite unexplored. In 1804 Jefferson sent an expedition under captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, which

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explored the valley of the Columbia river as far as the Pacific ocean, and thus gave us a title to Oregon, though many years elapsed before we took possession.



A stylized, cursive signature of John C. Clark, written in dark ink. The signature is fluid and elegant, with a prominent 'J' and 'C'.

The Barbary states on the Mediterranean coast of Africa had been for more than four centuries a nuisance to the civilized world. Their pirate cruisers swarmed upon the high



MERIWETHER LEWIS

From a print in the *Analectic Magazine* (1815) reproducing the drawing by St. Memin, which belonged to Captain Clark

seas and robbed the merchant ships of all nations. Important captives they held for ransom, and all others they sold into hopeless slavery. European war ships often punished them, but were unable to put down the



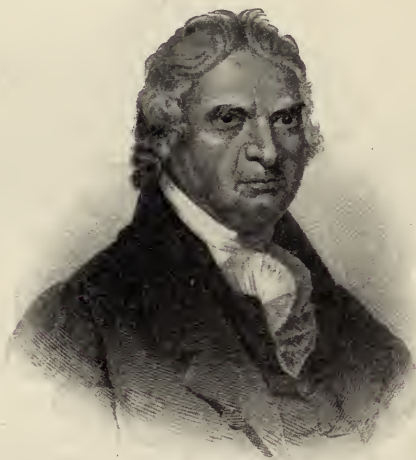
TRIPOLI MEDAL

evil; and the greatest nations had tried to bribe them to keep the peace by paying blackmail. The United States had at first felt obliged to adopt this humiliating policy, but at length our patience was exhausted. A small fleet was sent to the Mediterranean

and bombarded Tripoli. After a desultory warfare extending over two years Tripoli sued for peace ; and, the British navy presently following our example, a few years more saw the end of this abominable nuisance.

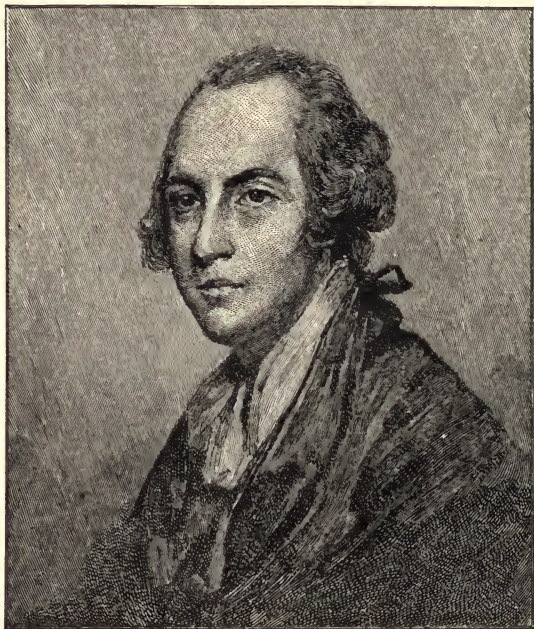
The popularity of Jefferson's administration was shown in the elections of 1804. When he was nominated for reëlection, George Clinton was nominated with him for the vice presidency, instead of Burr, who in 1801 had shown too much readiness to intrigue with Federalists. Cotesworth Pinckney and Rufus King were the Federalist candidates. The election was not a close one like the election of 1800. Out of 176 electoral votes the Federalists received only 14, and in both houses of Congress the Republican majority was overwhelming. After the nominations, but before the election, the country was shocked by a dreadful tragedy. The disappointed Burr had tried, with Federalist help, to succeed Clinton as governor of New York, but was defeated. Here, as before in 1801, Hamilton had used his influence against him, and now, in a fit of

desperation, Burr determined to get rid of this enemy. He contrived, in July, 1804, to force Hamilton into a duel, in which the latter was



Geo: Clinton

slain. The mourning of the country over the loss of this great man was intense, and the wretched Burr found that his public career was ruined. After a wild attempt to set up



A. Burr

a government for himself in the Mississippi valley, he was arrested and tried for treason, and though acquitted for want of sufficiently definite evidence, he became an outcast from society.

Jefferson's second administration was the beginning of a stormy period which ended in war. Under Washington and Adams we had with difficulty been kept from getting drawn into the world-wide struggle between England and France. Now that strife was renewed on such a gigantic scale as to force the whole civilized world to take sides. With his famous Berlin and Milan decrees, Napoleon sought to prevent neutral vessels from entering British harbors, while England replied with decrees, known as orders in council, forbidding neutral vessels to enter the harbors of any nation in league with Napoleon or under his leadership. The United States, as a prominent maritime neutral nation, had obtained a large share of the carrying trade, and these decrees wrought great injury to American commerce. If an American vessel touched at almost any port of continental Europe, the first British cruiser that came along deemed her its lawful prey; if she touched at a British port, then she might expect to be seized by the next French craft she should meet. The two greatest

naval powers in the world were thus united in a wholesale robbery of American ships and American merchandise. But England did us most harm, because she had more war ships and more privateers than France. In another respect England possessed a peculiar power of annoying us. She claimed and exercised the right of stopping the vessels of other nations and forcibly taking from them any seamen who appeared to be British subjects, in order to compel them to serve in the British navy. Such a claim on the part of France would annoy Americans but little, for no one was likely to mistake an American for a Frenchman. But to distinguish an American from an Englishman was not so easy, and consequently a great many citizens of the United States were impressed into the British service. The Revolutionary feeling of hostility to Great Britain, which had begun before 1800 to diminish in intensity, was revived and strengthened by these outrages. In 1807 the British frigate *Leopard*, of fifty guns, close to the coast of Virginia, fired upon the American

frigate *Chesapeake*, of thirty-eight guns, and killed or wounded more than twenty men. The American ship, being not even prepared for action, hauled down her flag, and was boarded by the British, who seized four of the crew and carried them off to Halifax. One of these, who was a British subject, was hanged as a deserter; the other three were condemned to death and then reprieved on condition of entering the British service.

At the news of this dastardly outrage the whole country was thrown into such excitement as had not been witnessed since the battle of Lexington. A cabinet meeting was held at Washington, measures were taken for procuring military stores and strengthening our coast defenses, and the states were called upon for one hundred thousand men. But the British government avoided war for the moment by sending a special envoy to Washington to chaffer and procrastinate. The act of the *Leopard* was disavowed, but there was no willingness shown to make reparation. Feeling unprepared for war, the United States

government had recourse to an exceedingly stupid and dangerous measure. It hoped to browbeat England and France by depriving them of our trade, and accordingly in 1807



WASHINGTON AT THE BEGINNING OF THE LAST CENTURY

From an early print

there was passed the “embargo act,” which forbade any vessel to set out from the United States for any foreign port. This wonderful piece of legislation did more harm to American commerce than all the cruisers of France and England could do; while as a means of

bringing either of these adversaries to reason it was quite useless. England, indeed, seemed rather to enjoy it, for while it diminished her commercial dealings with America, it increased her share in the general carrying trade of the world. In America the distress was felt most severely in New England, and, as usual in those days, whenever any part of the country felt dissatisfied with the policy of the Federal government, threats of secession were heard. In 1809 the embargo was repealed, and the "non-intercourse act" took its place. This act prohibited trade with England and France so long as their obnoxious measures should be kept in force, but it allowed trade with all other countries. It was as ineffectual as the embargo, but did not do quite so much harm to American commerce. The close of Jefferson's presidency was thus a season of national humiliation. In twenty years our great statesmen had done a wonderful work in creating a government able to make itself respected at home; but it was still too weak, in a military sense, to make itself respected abroad.

SECOND WAR WITH GREAT
BRITAIN

SECOND WAR WITH GREAT BRITAIN

Strength of the Republicans. Declaration of war. Naval victories. The war in the Northwest. The war on the Lakes. The war in the South. The treaty of Ghent.

This humiliating situation of the United States was not due to any fault of Jefferson or his party, and in the election of 1808 they won another great victory, though not quite so decisive as in 1804. The Federalist candidates were the same as before, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney and Rufus King; and now they obtained forty-seven of the one hundred and seventy-six electoral votes. James Madison, who had been Secretary of State since 1801, was elected President, and George Clinton was reelected to the vice presidency. Madison was a political thinker of the highest order, and had done more than any other man toward constructing our Federal Constitution. He had been a leading Federalist, though more moderate than Hamilton or

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Adams, but had soon taken sides with the Republicans. But his intelligence was too



Rufus King

broad to allow him to be a mere man of party; he was never an out-and-out Republican like Jefferson. By 1804 many of the

most intelligent Federalists had gone over to the Republicans; and the more rigid-minded men who were left, especially in New England, made the party more and more narrow and sectional, and at length brought it into general discredit. The most notable defection from the Federalist party was that of John Quincy Adams, about the time of the embargo.

In 1810 Congress repealed the non-intercourse act, which as a measure of intimidation had accomplished nothing. Congress now sought to use the threat of non-intercourse as a sort of bribe. It informed England and France that if either nation would repeal its obnoxious edicts, the non-intercourse act would be revived against the other. Napoleon, who was as eminent for lying as for fighting, then informed the United States that he revoked the Berlin and Milan decrees as far as American ships were concerned. At the same time he gave secret orders by which the decrees were to be practically enforced as harshly as ever. But the lie served its purpose. Congress revived the

non-intercourse act against Great Britain alone, and in 1811 hostilities actually began on sea and land. On sea the American frigate *President* had an encounter with the British sloop *Little Belt*, and nearly knocked her to pieces without suffering any damage. On land Tecumseh and his warriors, attacking our northwestern settlements with British assistance, were defeated at Tippecanoe by General Harrison. The growing war feeling was shown in the election of Henry Clay of Kentucky as Speaker of the House of Representatives, while on the floor of the House the leadership fell to John Caldwell Calhoun of South Carolina, and in the Senate to William Crawford of Georgia. Mr. Madison was nominated for a second term on condition of adopting the war policy; and on June 18, 1812, war against Great Britain was formally declared. Five days later the British government revoked its orders in council; but this concession came too late. The Americans had lost all patience, and probably nothing short of an abandonment of the right of

search on Great Britain's part could have prevented the war. The Federalists of New England, however, still opposed the war, and of the members of Congress who voted for



James Madison

it, three fourths were from the South and West. That this Federalist opposition was somewhat factious would appear from the presidential campaign. The Federalists were

too weak to nominate a candidate for the presidency, and Mr. Madison's only competitor was De Witt Clinton of New York, who had



De Witt Clinton

been nominated by a section of the Republicans as likely to prove a more efficient war magistrate than Madison. Most of the

Federalists now supported Clinton in a coalition which, as usual in such cases, proved disastrous to both sides. Of two hundred and eighteen electoral votes Madison received one hundred and twenty-eight, and was elected; the Federalists fell more than ever into disfavor, and Clinton's career was henceforth restricted to his own state.

The election showed that the war was popular. It had been made so by a series of naval victories which astonished everybody. On the 13th of August the frigate *Essex*, under command of Captain Porter, captured the sloop *Alert*, after a fight of eight minutes, without losing a man. On the 19th the frigate *Constitution*, under command of Captain Hull, after a half hour's fight in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, captured the frigate *Guerrière*. The American ship had fourteen men killed and wounded, and was ready for action again in a couple of hours; the British sloop lost one hundred men, her three masts with all her rigging were shot away, and her hull was so badly damaged that she could not be carried

off as a prize. On the 13th of October the sloop *Wasp*, Captain Jones, captured the sloop *Frolic* in a desperate fight off Cape Hatteras. On the 25th the frigate *United States*, Captain Decatur, captured the frigate *Macedonian* off



CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL

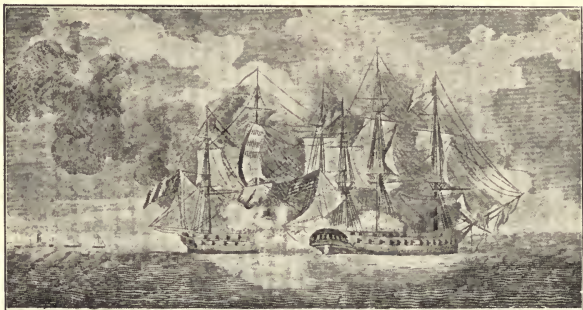
the island of Madeira after a fight of an hour and a half. The British ship lost one hundred and six men, was totally dismasted, and had nearly a hundred shot holes in her hull, but was brought away to America; Decatur's ship lost only twelve men, and was quite uninjured.



BAINBRIDGE MEDAL

These remarkable victories continued. On the 29th of December the *Constitution*, Captain Bainbridge, in a two hours' fight off the coast of Brazil, knocked to pieces the frigate *Java*, which lost two hundred and thirty men and had to be destroyed. On the 24th of February, 1813, off the coast of Guiana, the sloop *Hornet*, Captain Lawrence, destroyed the brig *Peacock*, which sank before her crew could be removed. The *Hornet's* rigging was much injured, but she lost only four men.

To appreciate the force of these facts, we need to remember that during the preceding twenty years of almost continuous warfare with France and her allies, in hundreds of



THE "CHESAPEAKE" AND "SHANNON"

From a print published in 1815

such single combats, the British navy had lost but five ships. Now in six fights against American vessels within a single year the British had been shockingly defeated every time. The explanation was to be found partly in the superiority of our shipbuilding, partly in the superiority of our gun practice and the better discipline of our crews. One of the British captains won success by training his men after the American method. On the 1st of June, 1813, the British frigate *Shannon*, Captain Broke, captured the American frigate *Chesapeake* in a severe battle near Boston harbor. The Americans lost



THE "ENTERPRISE" AND "BOXER"

From a print published in 1815

one hundred and forty-eight men, and the British eighty-three; the *Chesapeake* suffered more damage than her antagonist, though the disparity was less than in the case of the American victories above mentioned. The extreme jubilation in England served as an index to the chagrin which had been caused by the six successive defeats. On the 14th of August the American brig *Argus* was captured in the British Channel by the brig *Pelican*, and for a moment it might have seemed as if the spell of American success was broken. But a few weeks later Lieutenant Burrows in the brig *Enterprise* captured the brig *Boxer*

off Portland, Maine. In the spring Captain Porter in the frigate *Essex* had sailed around Cape Horn into the Pacific ocean, where he made a famous cruise and did immense damage to British commerce. In March, 1814, he was attacked in the harbor of Valparaiso by two British frigates, the *Phæbe* and the *Cherub*, and after the bloodiest fight of the war the *Essex* surrendered. In April, 1814, the American sloop *Peacock* captured the brig *Epervier* off the coast of Florida; in May the *Wasp* captured the sloop *Reindeer*, and in September the sloop *Avon*, both actions taking place in the British channel. In both there was the same prodigious disparity of loss as in earlier fights. The *Reindeer* and the *Avon* were completely destroyed, one losing sixty-five men, the other one hundred; while in the former action the *Wasp's* loss was twenty-six, in the latter only three. On the 20th of February, 1815, the *Constitution*, now commanded by Captain Stewart, capped the climax by capturing the frigate *Cyane* and the sloop *Levant* in an action of forty



THE "CONSTITUTION"

From a print published about 1815

minutes near the island of Madeira. The two British ships together were barely a match in strength for the *Constitution*, but were very skillfully handled; and the victory of "Old Ironsides" was as brilliant as any recorded in naval annals. A few weeks later the *Hornet* captured the brig *Penguin* off the Cape of Good Hope, and in the Indian ocean the *Peacock* closed the long tale of victory by overcoming the weaker *Nautilus*. These

last three victories occurred after peace had been declared.

Thus out of sixteen sea combats with approximately equal forces the Americans had been victorious in thirteen. The record of our privateers was not less remarkable. During the war we took about seventeen hundred British vessels, while the British took about an equal number from us. Considering that the American navy in 1812 consisted of about a dozen ships, while the British navy numbered more than a thousand, and that the Americans had not a single line-of-battle ship afloat, these results might well be called marvelous. No other nation has ever won such laurels in contending against the "mistress of the seas." The moral effect upon Europe was prodigious. Henceforth the United States ceased to be regarded as a nation that could be insulted with impunity.

Except for the moral effect of these splendid sea fights, the United States gained comparatively little by the war. On land the offensive operations of the army were feeble and



ENGRAVED TITLE-PAGE FOR THE "NAVAL MONUMENT"

(a book published in 1815 celebrating the victories of the American navy)

ineffectual. The army was small and poorly trained, and too much under the control of politicians. Hence we began with defeats. The military object of the Americans was to



James Hull

invade Canada and conquer it if possible. The military object of the British was to invade the United States and either detach a portion of our northwestern territory or secure positions which might prove valuable in bargaining for terms of peace. The most

important frontier town, Detroit, was held by William Hull, governor of the Michigan territory, a gallant veteran of the Revolutionary War. When war was declared he marched into Canada, but was driven back to Detroit by a superior force under General Brock. After a short siege Hull was obliged to surrender the town, thus throwing open to the enemy the whole region northwest of Ohio. In the fit of unreasoning rage and disappointment caused by this grave disaster, Hull was tried by a court-martial and sentenced to death, but was pardoned by Mr. Madison on account of past services. Subsequent research has shown that the verdict was grossly unjust; and the reputation of this brave but unfortunate man is now redeemed. In October a small force crossed Niagara river and foolishly attacked the British in their strong position on Queenstown Heights; it was defeated with heavy loss. Harrison, who had succeeded to the command in the Northwest, now attempted to recover Detroit; but his advanced guard under General Winchester

was defeated at the river Raisin on the 22d of January, 1813, by the British and Indians under General Proctor, and all the prisoners were cruelly massacred by the Indians.



O. H. Perry

Harrison was then driven back to Fort Meigs by Proctor, who besieged him there, but unsuccessfully.

During the summer of 1813 both British and Americans were busily engaged in building fleets with which to control Lake Erie. On the 10th of September the two fleets met

in battle, the British commanded by Commodore Barclay, the Americans by Commodore Perry. The forces were nearly equal. The battle, won by magnificent skill and daring on the part of the American commander, ended in the surrender of the whole British fleet and turned the scale of war in the Northwest. Ferried across the lake by Perry's fleet, Harrison's army now entered Canada and inflicted a crushing defeat upon Proctor at the river Thames (October 5). This was a severe blow to the Indians also, for their famous leader, Tecumseh, was killed. As a consequence of the victories of Perry and Harrison, the Americans recovered Detroit and the British were driven from our northwestern territory.

Next summer the Americans again invaded Canada under command of an excellent general, Jacob Brown, with whom served an officer presently to become famous,—Winfield Scott. They crossed the Niagara river and defeated the British in four well-fought battles, at Chippewa (July 5), Lundy's Lane (July 25),



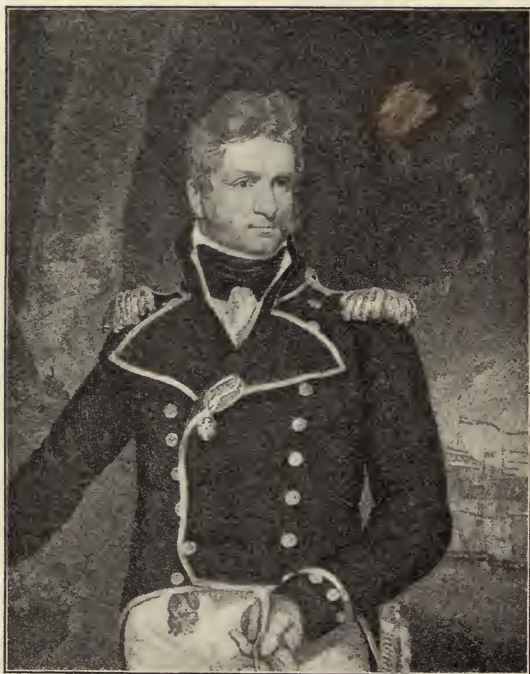
TWO VIEWS OF PERRY'S VICTORY

From prints published in 1815

and Fort Erie (August 15 and September 17); but in spite of these successes they obtained no secure foothold in Canada and retreated across the river before cold weather. While these things were going on the British were

planning an invasion of northeastern New York by the route which Carleton and Burgoyne had followed. To this end it was necessary to gain control of Lake Champlain, as Carleton had done in 1776. Fleets were built, as on Lake Erie the year before, and on the 11th of September a decisive battle was fought not far from Valcour Island where Arnold had maintained such a heroic struggle. The British fleet was annihilated by Commodore Macdonough, and the British enterprise was abandoned. But while this attempt upon New York was a failure, the British succeeded in seizing the unoccupied wilds of Maine east of the Penobscot river, and thus creating a panic in New England.

The region west of Georgia and south of the Tennessee river was then a wilderness with no important towns except Natchez and Mobile. The principal military power in it was that of the Creek Indians, who took the occasion to attack the frontier settlements, and in August, 1813, began with a terrible massacre at Fort Mimms near Mobile. This



J. Maudonough "



brought upon the scene the formidable Tennessee militia commanded by Andrew Jackson, who as a youth had served under Thomas Sumter in the Revolutionary War. After a



ANDREW JACKSON

After the portrait by Jarvis made in 1815

bloody campaign of seven months Jackson had completely subdued the Creeks and was ready to cope with a very different sort of enemy.

In March, 1814, Napoleon was dethroned and sent to Elba, and thus some of Wellington's

finest troops were detached for service in America. In August some five thousand of these veterans landed in Chesapeake Bay, took the defenseless city of Washington, and burned the public buildings there, which was not much to their credit. They then attempted



THE CAPITOL AT WASHINGTON AFTER BEING BURNED
BY THE BRITISH

From an old print

Baltimore, but were defeated, and retired from the scene to take part in a more serious enterprise. This expedition against Washington was designed chiefly for insult; the expedition against New Orleans was designed to inflict deadly injury. It was intended to make a permanent conquest of the lower Mississippi,

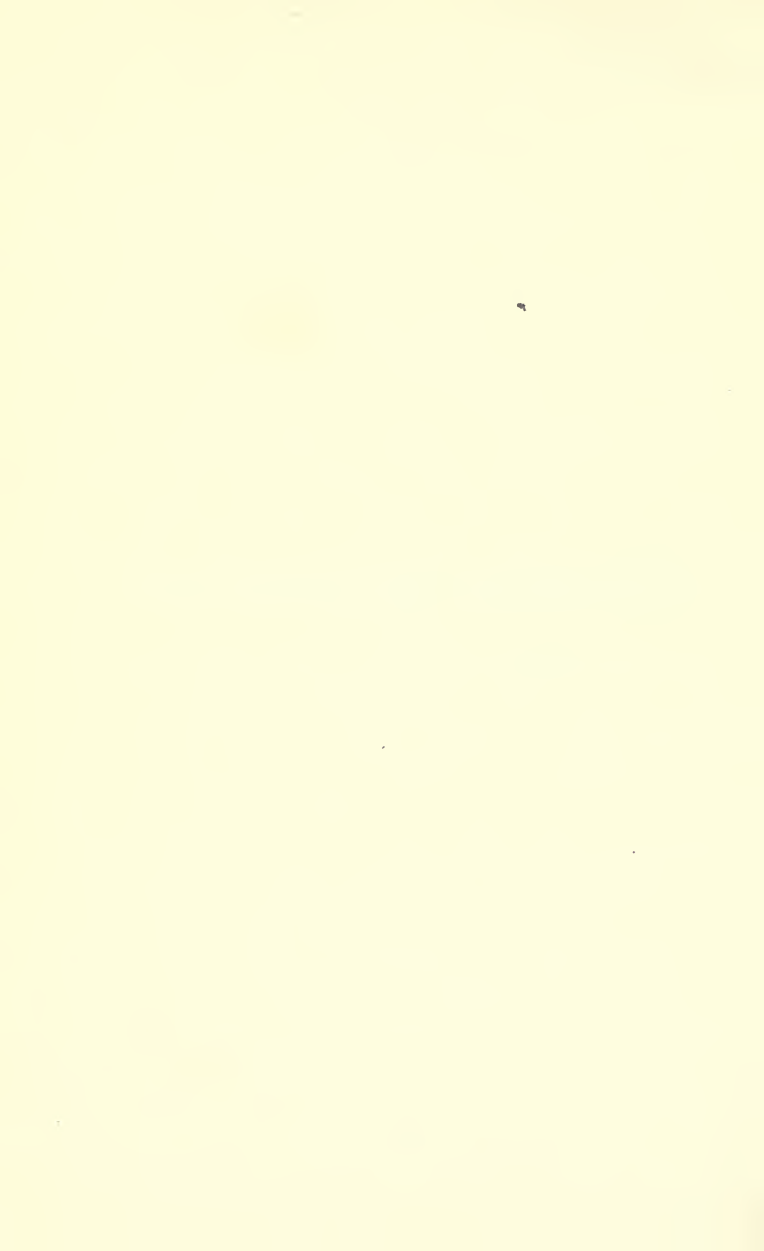
and to secure for Great Britain the western bank of the river. In December the British army of twelve thousand men under Sir Edward Pakenham landed below New Orleans. To oppose these veterans of the peninsula, Jackson had six thousand militia of that sturdy race whose fathers had vanquished Ferguson at Kings Mountain and whose children so nearly vanquished Grant at Shiloh. He awaited the enemy in an intrenched position, where, on the 8th of January, 1815, Pakenham was unwise enough to try to overwhelm him by a direct assault. In less than half an hour the British were in full retreat, leaving Pakenham and twenty-six hundred men behind them killed or wounded; the American loss was eight killed and thirteen wounded. The disparity of loss is perhaps unparalleled in history.

News traveled so slowly in those days that the victory of New Orleans, like the last three naval victories, occurred after peace had been made. From the first the war had been unpopular in New England. Our victories on

the sea made little difference in the vast naval force of Great Britain, which was able to blockade our whole Atlantic coast. Now that Napoleon was out of the way it would be necessary for the United States to fight single-handed with Great Britain. In view of these things, and provoked by the invasion of Maine, the Federalists of New England held a convention at Hartford in December, 1814, to discuss the situation of affairs and decide upon the proper course to be pursued. As there was much secrecy in the proceedings, a suspicion was aroused that the purpose of the convention was to break up the Union and form a separate New England confederacy. This suspicion completed the political ruin of the Federalist party. What might have come from the Hartford convention we do not know, for on the 24th of December the treaty of peace was signed at Ghent. The treaty left things apparently just as they had been before the war, for England did not explicitly renounce the right of search and impressment. But in spite of this it had

been made evident that European nations could no longer regard the United States as a weak nation which might be insulted with impunity. Partly for this reason, and partly because of the long European peace which followed, the British claim to the right of search and impressment was no longer exercised, and at length in 1856 was expressly renounced.

THE RISE OF THE DEMOCRACY



THE RISE OF THE DEMOCRACY

The era of good feeling. Florida. Monroe doctrine. Growth of the nation. Growth of slavery. The Missouri Compromise. The young West. Whigs and Democrats. Tariffs. Nullification. A new era. The spoils system. Whigs come into power. Oregon and Texas.

In the presidential election of 1816 the Federalist candidate, Rufus King, received only thirty-four electoral votes, against one hundred and eighty-seven for the Republican candidate, James Monroe. In 1820, when Monroe was nominated for a second term, the Federalists put no candidate into the field, and Monroe's election was practically unanimous; for form's sake one of the electors voted for John Quincy Adams, so that no other President might share with Washington the glory of an election absolutely unanimous. The two parties had now acquiesced in each other's measures, and all, save a few malcontents, called themselves Republicans. The end of the war was the end of

the political issues which had divided parties since 1789, and some little time was required for new issues to define themselves; so that the period of Monroe's administrations has been called "the era of good feeling." In point of fact, however, it was by no means a time of millennial happiness.

The changed attitude of the United States toward European powers was illustrated in two events of this period. The Seminole Indians, aided by the Spanish authorities in Florida, molested our southern frontier until General Jackson invaded that territory in order to put an end to the nuisance. Though Jackson's rough measures were not fully sustained by the United States, yet resistance on the part of Spain was so hopeless that she consented to sell Florida to the United States for five million dollars; and a treaty to this effect was made in 1819.

About this time the revolt of Mexico and the Spanish colonies in South America had made considerable progress, and it seemed likely that the "Holy Alliance" of Austria,

Prussia, and Russia would interfere to assist Spain in subduing her colonies. To check such a movement, Mr. Monroe declared, in a message to Congress in 1823, that the United



James Monroe

States regarded the continents of North and South America as no longer open to colonization, and would resent an attempt on the part of any European nation to reduce any

independent American nation to the condition of a colony. In this bold declaration the United States had the full sympathy of England, and it proved effectual. The attitude of mind implied in such a declaration showed that our period of national weakness was felt to have come to an end.

Since the time of Washington the growth of the United States had been remarkable indeed. The population now numbered nearly ten million; the public revenue had increased from five million dollars to twenty-five million dollars. New states were formed with surprising rapidity, as the obstacles to migration were removed. The chief obstacles had been the hostility of the Indians and the difficulty of getting from place to place. During the late war the Indian power had been broken by Harrison in the north and by Jackson in the south. In 1807 Robert Fulton had invented the steamboat. In 1811 a steamboat was launched on the Ohio river at Pittsburg, and presently such nimble craft were plying on all the western rivers, carrying settlers

and traders, farm produce and household utensils. This gave an immense impetus to



R. Fuller

the western migration. After Ohio had been admitted to the Union in 1802, ten years had elapsed before the next state, Louisiana, was

added. But in six years after the war a new state was added every year: Indiana in 1816, Mississippi in 1817, Illinois in 1818, Alabama in 1819, Maine in 1820, Missouri in 1821. The admission of the last-named state was a portentous event, for it suddenly brought the slavery question into the foreground.

Before the Revolution all the colonies had negro slaves, but north of Maryland these slaves were few in number and of no very great value as property. Hence they were soon emancipated in all the northern states except Delaware. At the close of the eighteenth century there was a strong antislavery feeling even in Virginia and North Carolina, and it was generally supposed that slavery would gradually become extinct without making serious political trouble. The only states strongly in favor of slavery were South Carolina and Georgia, where the cultivation of rice and indigo seemed to make negro labor indispensable. But at about that time the inventions of the steam engine, the spinning machine, and the power loom had combined



Eli Whitney

to set up the giant manufactories of England, and there was thus suddenly created a great demand for cotton. In 1793 Eli Whitney, a

Connecticut schoolmaster living in Georgia, invented the famous cotton gin, an instrument so simple that slaves could use it, and which enabled cotton to be cleaned and got ready for market with astonishing speed. Hitherto very little cotton had been grown in South Carolina and Georgia, but now cotton growing became very profitable, and there was a great demand for negro slaves. In 1808, according to a provision of the Federal Constitution, the importation of slaves from Africa was prohibited by law, so that henceforth cotton planters could only obtain slaves by buying them in such border states as Virginia and Kentucky. This made the raising of negroes so profitable to the tobacco planters of the border states that antislavery sentiments soon died out among them, and the way was prepared for uniting all the slave states into a solid South opposed to a solid North. Henceforth there was no likelihood that slavery would die a natural death. On the contrary, the policy of the slaveholders became extremely aggressive and sought new territory

in which to introduce this barbarous system of labor and build up new states to maintain and extend their authority in the Federal Union.

It was not until the westward migration had crossed the Mississippi river and entered upon the vast Louisiana territory which Jefferson had added to the national domain that the conflict began. A kind of compromise had been kept up from the beginning by admitting a free state and a slave state by turns, so as to balance each other in Congress. Thus Vermont had been counterbalanced by Kentucky, Tennessee by Ohio, Louisiana by Indiana, Mississippi by Illinois. In like manner Alabama, in 1819, was naturally counterbalanced in the following year by Maine; but as Missouri was also knocking at the door of Congress, the southern members now refused to admit Maine until the northern members should consent to admit Missouri as a slave state. The discussion was the most important that had come up since the adoption of the Constitution; for it involved the whole question of the power of the government to allow

or prohibit slavery in the national domain. It was settled in 1820 by the famous Missouri Compromise, effected chiefly by the efforts of Henry Clay. Missouri was admitted as a slave state, but it was agreed that slavery should be prohibited in the remainder of the Louisiana Purchase north of the parallel of $36^{\circ} 30'$. In other words, the slaveholders gained their point by promising "not to do so any more"; and, like most such promises, it was kept till an occasion arose for breaking it. That occasion did not arise for more than thirty years, and it was not until the latter part of this interval that the question of slavery again became uppermost in national politics.

It was the extension of national territory or the admission of new states that brought up the slavery question. Several years now elapsed before the national area or the number of states was increased. Enough country was already covered to answer the needs of the people until better means of communication were devised. The most important



THE LOCKS AT LOCKPORT ON THE ERIE CANAL

From prints published in 1838

avenue of trade opened in this period was the Erie canal, which brought the Hudson river directly into connection with the Great Lakes. This insured the commercial supremacy of the city of New York as the chief outlet for western traffic. At the time of the Declaration of Independence the state of New York ranked seventh among the thirteen in population, and the Indian frontier was between Albany and Utica. In the census of 1820 the city of New York for the first time showed a larger population than Philadelphia, and the state came to the head of the list, instead of Virginia, which had hitherto been the foremost state. It was the westward migration from New England that first filled up central New York and carried the state to the head of the list. The Erie canal and steam navigation on the lakes presently carried this migration into Michigan; but it was not till 1837 that that state was admitted into the Union as a balance for Arkansas, admitted in 1836. New England people had meanwhile occupied the northern parts of

Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois; but it was not New England that first determined the character of the young West. Long before the overflow of New England had filled rural New York, the overflow of Virginia and North Carolina had made the states of Kentucky and Tennessee, and a hardy population from all parts of the Alleghenies had thrust itself into all parts of the West, from the prairies of Illinois to the highlands of Alabama. These people were as different from the slaveholding planters of South Carolina or Louisiana as from the merchants and yeomanry of New England; and when by and by the stress of civil war came, they were the stout ligament which held the Union together. They were rough and ready, inclined to despise the refinements of civilized life, very loose in their ideas of finance, and somewhat too careless in their use of pistols. They were intensely American withal, cared nothing for a European civilization of which they knew nothing, and were sufficient unto themselves. These men had their representative statesman in



Thomas H. Benton.

Thomas Benton¹ and their popular hero in Andrew Jackson.

In the presidential election of 1824 all parties called themselves Republicans, and political

¹ He did not represent their shaky financial notions, however; on this point his views were so sound that he was nicknamed "Old Bullion."

issues were so ill-defined that the contest seemed to concern itself only with the personal merits of the candidates. The real but unrecognized issue was between the notions of the young democratic West and the polite, half-aristocratic notions of the old Atlantic states. The four candidates were John Quincy Adams, one of the grandest figures in American history; Henry Clay, the genial author of the Missouri Compromise; William Crawford, earliest representative alike of the wire-pullers and of the secessionists; and the invincible soldier, Andrew Jackson. The latter had the greatest number of electoral votes, but no one had a majority; and so the election was thrown into the House of Representatives, where the friends of Clay, uniting with the friends of Adams, secured the election of the latter. Jackson's friends thought that their hero had been ill-used; but they were made happy by the next election, in 1828, where Adams and Jackson were the only opposing candidates, and the former obtained only eighty-three out of two hundred and

sixty-one electoral votes. Jackson's victory in 1828 was the victory of the West over the East, and marked the rise of the new democracy. It was in the canvass preceding this election that Jackson's supporters assumed

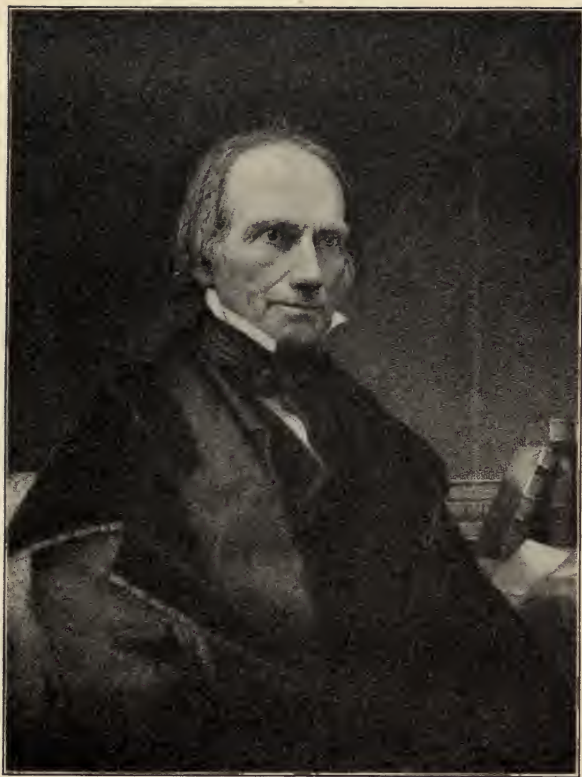


John Quincy Adams .

the name of Democrats. Their opponents were known at first as "National Republicans," but in the course of his administration, as they saw fit to represent Jackson as a kind of tyrant, like George III, they

took the name of "Whigs"; and henceforth, until 1854, Whig and Democrat were the names of the two political parties in the United States.

The Whigs approved of allowing the Federal government to use the public money in building roads, dredging rivers, and making other internal improvements; the Democrats thought that such things ought to be done by the local governments or by private enterprise. The Whigs espoused the policy of taxing the whole community in order to support a few manufacturers in carrying on a business which, without such aid, it was presumed would be a losing one. This was done by means of a high tariff upon imported goods. It was ingeniously called "protecting American labor," and was glorified by Clay as "the American system," though in reality the custom is as old as human greed, and might as well be called Asiatic as American. The Democrats opposed this policy, but not always intelligently. Again, the Whigs were in favor of continuing the National Bank



J. H. Conway

which had been chartered by Congress in 1816 ; the Democrats were bitterly opposed to it ; and, with regard to all these points—internal improvements, tariff, and bank—the Whigs favored a loose, and the Democrats a strict, interpretation of the Federal Constitution.

The War of 1812 had made it difficult to obtain manufactured goods from abroad, and articles of an inferior quality had in many instances begun to be made in the United States. Our manufacturers thought this scarcity a desirable thing, and tried to prolong it after the end of the war by taxing imported goods so heavily as to make people buy their inferior articles instead. One effect of the tariff has been to prevent American goods from attaining the high standard of excellence which they would have reached under a system of free competition. For example, if Scotch woolens were to be admitted free of duty, American woolens would either have to be made as excellent as the Scotch, or people would stop buying them ; and accordingly they would soon come to be as fine as the Scotch goods. But

people were afraid that unless foreign competition were ruled out, it would be impossible to get American manufactories well started. High tariffs were accordingly adopted in 1828 and 1832.

These tariffs were bitterly opposed by the southern states, except Louisiana, where the sugar planters were ready to admit the high-tariff principle in order to apply it to foreign sugars. The southerners had no manufactures of their own, and naturally preferred to buy good clothes and good tools at a low price, rather than poor clothes and poor tools at a high price. The doctrine of the Kentucky resolutions of 1799 made great progress in the South; and in 1832 a state convention in South Carolina declared the tariff law null and void, forbade the collection of duties at any port in the state, and called for troops to resist the Federal government if necessary. This was "nullification." It found no favor in the eyes of Jackson, though he disliked the tariff law as much as the South Carolinians. He declared that "the Federal Union must

and shall be preserved," sent an armed fleet to Charleston harbor, and warned the people of South Carolina that any attempt at resisting the law would be put down with a high hand. Presently, in 1833, a new tariff law, known as the "Compromise Tariff," was passed, and some concessions were made which afforded



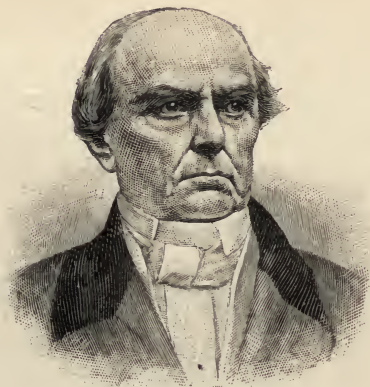
THE MOHAWK AND HUDSON RAILROAD, 1831

Redrawn from an old sketch

South Carolina an opportunity to repeal her ordinance of nullification.

About 1830 the United States was entering upon an era of more rapid progress than had ever been witnessed before. The era was quite as remarkable for the civilized world as a whole. In 1830 the first American railroad was put in operation, and by 1840 nearly all the chief cities east of the Alleghenies were connected by rail, and the system was rapidly

extending itself in the West. The effect of railroads was especially great in America, where the ordinary roads have always been very bad as compared with those of Europe. Their effect in hastening the growth of our western country by and by surpassed that which had been wrought by steamboats. In 1836 John Ericsson invented the screw propeller, which required much less fuel than the paddle wheel; and two years afterward steamships began to make regular trips across the Atlantic. Presently this set up the vast emigration of laborers from Europe, which has been going on ever since. Our cities began to lose their village-like appearance; in 1830 New York had a population of rather more than two hundred thousand. Agricultural machines began to be invented; friction matches came into use; anthracite coal came in to aid both manufactures and locomotion; and in 1836 the Patent Office had so much to do that it was made a distinct bureau. At the same time our methods of education and our newspapers were improved, and American literature began to attract the

*Daniel Webster*

world's attention. Before 1830, Bryant, Irving, and Cooper had become distinguished; in the decade after 1830, Longfellow, Whittier, Hawthorne, Holmes, Bancroft, and Prescott appeared on the scene, soon to be followed by Emerson. In this period Daniel Webster, already famous for many years, was at the height of his wonderful power. He was probably the greatest orator that ever lived, after Demosthenes and Chatham, and as a master of the English language he was superior to Chatham. His magnificent speeches, the most

impressive passages from which were made familiar to every schoolboy, contributed greatly to raise the love of the Union into a romantic sentiment for which people would fight as desperately as ever cavalier fought in defense of his king. In this way Webster rendered incalculable service, and not a bit too soon. For humanitarian movements were beginning to mark this new era; and along with prison reform and temperance societies came the abolitionists, with their assaults upon negro slavery, bravely led in the press by William Lloyd Garrison, in Congress by John Quincy Adams, who in 1831 was elected to the House of Representatives, where he stayed till his death in 1848. The southern members tried to smother the discussion of the subject of slavery, but Adams could not be silenced, and in 1836 he went so far as to enunciate the doctrine upon which Mr. Lincoln afterward rested his proclamation of emancipation.

Some of the changes which marked this new era were by no means changes for the better. Hitherto all our presidents, taken



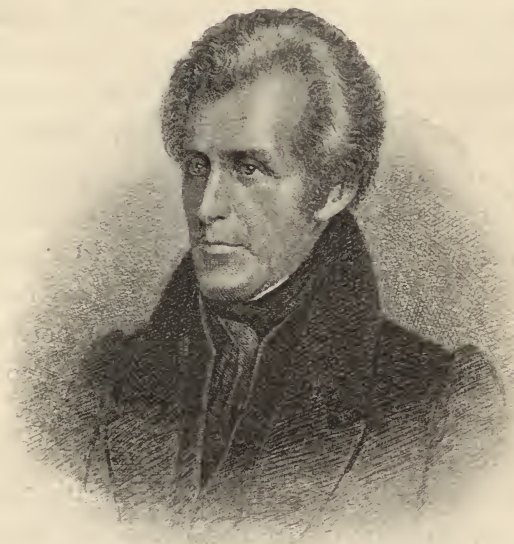
Wm. Lloyd Garrison.

from the two oldest states, Massachusetts and Virginia, had been men of aristocratic type, with well-trained minds and polished manners, like European statesmen ; and all except Monroe had been men of extraordinary ability. In Jackson, the first President from beyond the Alleghenies, the idol of the rough pioneer West, we had a very different type of man. There was immense native energy, with little training ; downright honesty of purpose, with a very feeble grasp of the higher problems of statecraft. Jackson was a man of violent measures and made many mistakes. His greatest mistake was the use of government offices as rewards for his friends and adherents. Heretofore the civil service had been practically independent of politics, as it is to-day in England. There had been but one instance of a great party overthrow ; that was in the election of 1800. Jefferson's followers then wished him to turn Federalist postmasters and collectors out of office, and put Republicans in their places ; but he had been too wise to do so. In 1829 Jackson

introduced into national politics the principle of "rotation in office," by which government officials were liable to be turned out every fourth year, not for any misconduct, but simply to make room for hungry applicants belonging to the opposite party. Jackson was not the inventor of this system. It had already been tried in state politics, and brought to something like perfection in New York. It was a New York politician, William Marcy, who first used the phrase, "To the victors belong the spoils," thereby implying that a public office is not a public trust but a bit of plunder, and that the services of an officer paid by the people are due, not to the people, but to a party or a party chief. The author of the phrase doubtless never supposed that he was making one of the most infamous remarks recorded in history; and the honest Jackson would probably have been greatly surprised if he had been allowed a glimpse of the future, and seen that he was introducing a gigantic system of knavery and corruption which within forty years would grow

into the most serious of the evils threatening the continuance of our free government.

Jackson made another mistake, which was trivial compared with the adoption of the



Andrew Jackson

spoils system, but which created much more disturbance at the time. His antipathy to the National Bank led him not only, in 1832,

to veto the bill for the renewal of its charter, but in the following year to withdraw the public money deposited in the bank, and distribute it among various state banks. This violent measure led to a series of events which in 1837 culminated in the most distressing commercial panic that had ever been known in America. Martin Van Buren, of New York, was then President, having been elected in 1836 over the western soldier, Harrison. Van Buren belonged to Jackson's wing of the Democratic party, in the ranks of which a schism was appearing between the nullifiers and the men who were devoted to the Union. He was what would now be known as a "machine politician," but of the more honorable sort. His administration was a fairly able one. In the course of it one phase of the National Bank question reached a satisfactory solution in the so-called sub-treasury system, which, after some vicissitudes, was finally established in 1846, and is still in force. By this system the public revenues are not deposited in any bank, but are

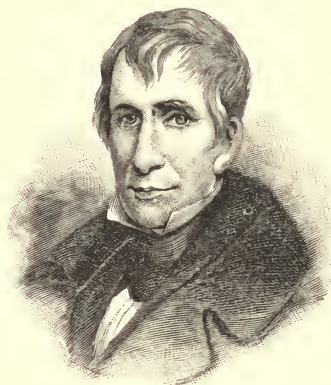
paid over on demand to the treasury department by the collectors, who are required to give bonds for the proper discharge of their duty. The establishment of this system was



Martin Van Buren

creditable to Van Buren's administration, but the panic of 1837 caused so much distress as to make many people wish for a change in the government. Turning to their own uses the same kind of popular sentiment which

had elected Jackson, the Whigs nominated again the plain soldier, Harrison, who had lived in a log cabin and had hard cider on his table. In the famous "hard-cider campaign" of 1840 Harrison won a sweeping



W. H. Harrison

victory, getting two hundred and thirty-four electoral votes to Van Buren's sixty. The Whigs had a majority in both houses of Congress. But the managers of the party had made a mistake such as has since recurred in American politics. For Vice President

they had nominated a Democrat, John Tyler, of Virginia, in the hope of getting votes from those Democrats who were dissatisfied with Jackson and Van Buren. Just one month after Harrison's inauguration he died, and Tyler became President. By this unexpected event the Whigs lost the fruits of their victory. The President was able, by his vetoes, to defeat their measures, and thus their attempts to undo the work of Jackson and Van Buren, as regards the National Bank, ended in failure.

Under Tyler's administration, questions of foreign policy, involving chances of war, again came into the foreground; but they were very different questions from those which had occupied our attention in the beginning of the century, and the mere statement of them gives a vivid impression of the enormous growth of the United States since the War of 1812. The northwestern corner of North America, down to the parallel of $54^{\circ} 40'$, now known as the territory of Alaska, was then a kind of appendage to Siberia,

142 *How the United States became a Nation*

and belonged to Russia. The region between Russian America and California, known as Oregon, was claimed by the United States, on the ground of the discoveries of Lewis and Clark. But Great Britain also had claims



John Tyler

upon this region, and since 1818 it had been subject to the joint occupation of Great Britain and the United States. But by 1842 the American stream of westward migration, crossing the Rocky mountains, had poured

into Oregon, and it began to be a question how this vast territory should be divided. The Americans claimed everything, and the Democrats went into the next presidential campaign with the alliterative war cry, "Fifty-four forty or fight"; but popular interest in the question was not strong enough to sustain this bold policy. Great western statesmen like Benton appreciated the importance of Oregon much better than great eastern statesmen like Webster; but none were fully alive to its importance, and the southerners, represented by Calhoun, felt little interest in a territory which seemed quite unavailable for the making of slave states. Accordingly, in 1846 the matter was compromised with Great Britain, and the territory was divided at the forty-ninth parallel, all above that line being British, all below American. If the feeling of national solidarity in the United States had been nearly as strong as it is to-day, we should probably have insisted upon our claim to the whole; in which case we should now, since our purchase of Alaska from Russia,

possess the whole Pacific coast north of Mexico to Bering strait. It is perhaps to be regretted that such a bold policy was not pursued in 1846. It had many chances of success, for our available military strength, all things considered, was then probably not inferior to that of Great Britain.

Very different was the popular feeling with regard to Texas. That magnificent country, greater in extent than any country of Europe except Russia, had been settled by emigrants from the United States, and in 1835 had rebelled against Mexican rule. In 1836 the American General Houston had defeated the Mexican General Santa Anna in the decisive battle of San Jacinto and won the independence of Texas. After this the slaveholders of the southern states wished to annex Texas to the Union. Lying south of the parallel of $36^{\circ} 30'$, it might become a slave state, and it was hoped that it might hereafter be divided into several states, so as to maintain the weight of the southerners in the United States Senate. After the admission of Arkansas in 1836, and

Michigan to balance it in 1837, the South had no more room for expansion unless it should



Sam Houston

acquire new territory; whereas the North had still a vast space westward at its command.

It seemed likely that the North would presently gain a steady majority in the Senate; and in the House of Representatives, where strength depended on population, the North was constantly gaining, partly because the institution of slavery prevented the South from sharing in the advantages of the emigration from Europe, and partly for other reasons connected with the inferiority of slave labor to free labor. It was therefore probable that before long the North would come to control the action of Congress, and might then try to abolish slavery. This was a natural dread on the part of the South, and the abolitionist agitation tended to strengthen and exasperate it. The only safeguard for the South seemed to be the acquisition of fresh territory, and thus the annexation of Texas came now to furnish the burning question in politics and to array the northern and southern states against each other in a contest for supremacy which could only be settled by an appeal to arms. In the presidential election of 1844 the Democratic candidate



James K. Polk

was James K. Polk of Tennessee and the Whig candidate was Henry Clay; and there was a third nomination which determined the result of the election. The abolitionists had put forward James Birney as a presidential candidate in 1840, but had got very few votes; they now put him forward again. The contest was close. The success of the Whigs seemed probable until the weakness of Clay's moral fiber ruined it,—a lesson for American politicians, by which too few have

had the good sense to profit. In the idle hope of catching Democratic votes, he published a letter favoring the annexation of Texas at some future time. This device met the failure which ought to follow all such flimsy maneuvers. It won no Democratic votes for Clay, but angered a great many antislavery Whigs, who threw away their votes upon Birney and thus carried the state of New York over to Polk and elected him President. It was the most closely contested election in our history except those of 1800, 1876, and 1884.

THE SLAVE POWER

THE SLAVE POWER

War with Mexico. Wilmot Proviso. California. Effects of the Compromise. Kansas-Nebraska bill. The struggle for Kansas. Dred Scott. The crisis.

The Democratic party thus reinstated was quite different from the Democratic party which had elected Jackson and Van Buren. Its policy was now shaped mainly by the followers of Calhoun, the representatives of slavery and nullification, though the latter political heresy was not likely to assert itself so long as they could control the Federal government. With the election of Polk the North and South are finally arrayed in opposition to each other; the question as to slavery comes to the front, and stays there until the Civil War.

In 1845 Texas was admitted to the Union, with the understanding that it might hereafter be divided so as to make several slave states. Mexico was offended, but no occasion

for war arose until it was furnished by boundary troubles due to that peculiar craving for territory which at this moment possessed the minds of the slaveholders. The boundary between Texas and Mexico was a matter of dispute, and early in 1846 Mr. Polk ordered General Taylor to march in and take possession of the disputed territory. This action was resented by Mexico and led to a war, which lasted nearly eighteen months. In the course of it California was conquered by Fremont, New Mexico by Kearney, and the northern portion of Mexico by Taylor; while Scott, landing at Vera Cruz, advanced and captured the city of Mexico. The United States soldiers vanquished the Mexicans wherever they found them and whatsoever the disparity of numbers. Thus at Buena Vista, February 22, 1847, Taylor routed a Mexican army outnumbering him more than four to one; and some of the exploits of Doniphan in his march to Chihuahua remind us of the Greeks at Cunaxa or Arbela. Many incidents of the war were quite romantic, and it is interesting to the

student of history as having been the school in which most of the great generals of our



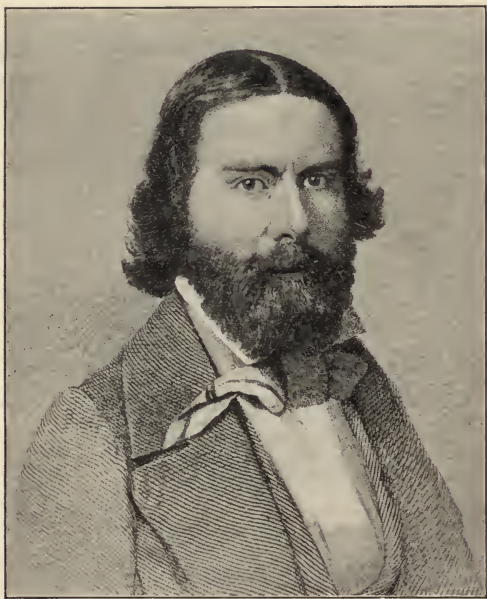
Winfield Scott.

Civil War were trained to their work. In February, 1848, a treaty was made in which

Mexico gave up to the United States a territory almost as extensive as that which Jefferson had obtained from Napoleon. It brought the map of the United States very nearly to what it is to-day, except for the acquisition of Alaska.

This immense acquisition of territory was a most fortunate event for everybody concerned in it; but its immediate effect upon our politics was far more disturbing than anything which had occurred since 1820. The antislavery party looked upon the war with strong disfavor, and their sentiments found expression in the most remarkable political poems of modern times, the first series of *Biglow Papers* by James Russell Lowell. There was a renewal of the sectional strife which had been quieted for a time by the Missouri Compromise. Slavery had been prohibited in the new territory by Mexican law, and the North wished to have this prohibition kept in force, but the South would not consent. To some the simplest solution seemed to be to prolong the Missouri Compromise line from the Rocky mountains to the Pacific, but neither party

was willing to give up so much to the other. Opposition to slavery had greatly increased at

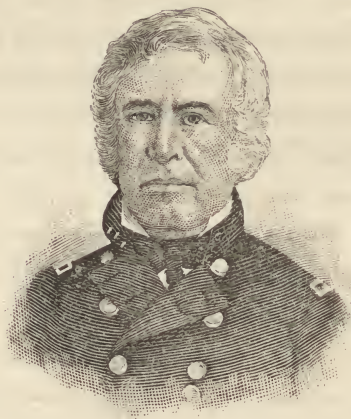


M. Lowell

the North since 1820, and this had naturally increased the obstinacy of the South, so that it was becoming difficult to make compromises.

In 1846 David Wilmot, a Democratic member of Congress from Pennsylvania, laid down the principle upon which, though not adopted at the time, the North was destined finally to take its stand and march to victory. By the famous Wilmot Proviso slavery was to be forever prohibited in the whole of the territory acquired from Mexico. The proviso was not adopted in Congress, but in 1848 it called into existence the Free-soil party, formed by the union of antislavery Democrats and Whigs with the abolitionists. This party nominated Martin Van Buren for President and Charles Francis Adams for Vice President. The Democrats nominated Lewis Cass of Michigan, and the Whigs nominated the military hero, Taylor; and neither of these two parties dared in its platform to say a word about the one burning question of the day,—the question of slavery in the new territory. The Free-soilers decided the election by drawing from the Democratic vote in New York, and so Taylor became President. Taylor was by far the ablest of the Presidents between Jackson

and Lincoln. He was brave, honest, and shrewd; and though a Louisiana slave owner, he was unflinching in his devotion to the Union. He received warm support from the



Z. Taylor

great Missouri senator, Thomas Benton, the most eminent in ability of the Jacksonian Democrats. The political struggle during Taylor's administration related chiefly to the admission of California as a state in the Union.

Hitherto the westward migration had gone on at a steady pace, filling up one area after another as it went along. In 1846 Iowa was admitted to the Union, the first free state west of the Mississippi; in 1848 the admission of Wisconsin at last filled up the region east of that river; and the two states served as a counterweight in the Senate to Florida and Texas. Now the immigration took a sudden leap to the Pacific coast. In 1848 gold was discovered in California and people rushed thither from all points of the compass in quest of sudden riches. Within a year the population had become large enough to entitle it to admission to the Union, and there was need of a strong government to hold in check the numerous ruffians who had flocked in along with honest people. In 1849 the people of California agreed upon a state constitution forbidding slavery and applied for admission to the Union. The southern members of Congress hotly opposed this, and threats of secession began to be heard. The controversy went on for a year, until it was

settled by a group of compromise measures devised by Clay, who thirty years before had succeeded so well with his Missouri Compromise. It was now agreed that California should be admitted as a free state; and in return for this concession the northern members consented to a very stringent law for the arrest by United States officers of fugitive slaves in the northern states. The region between California and Texas was to be organized into two territories, — Utah (including Nevada) and New Mexico (including Arizona); and the question whether slavery should be allowed in these territories was postponed. Before these measures had become law Mr. Taylor, who, supported by Benton, had taken strong ground against the threats of secession, suddenly died, and the Vice President, Millard Fillmore, became President. Mr. Fillmore, like his two successors, belonged to the class of politicians whom the southerners called “doughfaces,” — men who were ready to make almost any concessions to the slave power for the sake of avoiding strife.



Millard Fillmore

Instead of bringing quiet, as the Missouri Compromise had done, the Compromise of 1850 was the prelude to more bitter and deadly strife. The cruelties attending the execution of the fugitive slave law aroused fierce indignation at the North, and presently produced a book which had an enormous sale, and was translated into almost all the literary languages of the world. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, by Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, was a story



1473 Stowe

written to show what negro slavery really was. The book was written in a wonderful spirit of fairness, rather understating than exaggerating the evils of slavery, and it carried all the more conviction for that reason. Its influence in strengthening the antislavery feeling at the North must have been incalculably great. Further service was done in the same direction by the bold speeches and lectures of two famous Boston orators, the lawyer Wendell Phillips and the minister Theodore Parker. At the same time the political attitude of the extreme abolitionists was very unwise. Some of them called the Federal Constitution a "covenant with hell," because it permitted slavery, and seemed ready to see the Union broken up rather than submit to the demands of the South. Many anti-slavery Whigs, without going to such lengths, became disgusted with their party for approving the late compromises, and abstained from voting at the next election. The Whigs having triumphed in 1848 with one of the two chief heroes of the Mexican War, now nominated

the other, General Scott. The Democrats nominated Franklin Pierce, a northern "dough-face"; and the Free-soilers nominated John Hale, much the ablest of the three candidates. There were two hundred and fifty-four electoral



Franklin Pierce

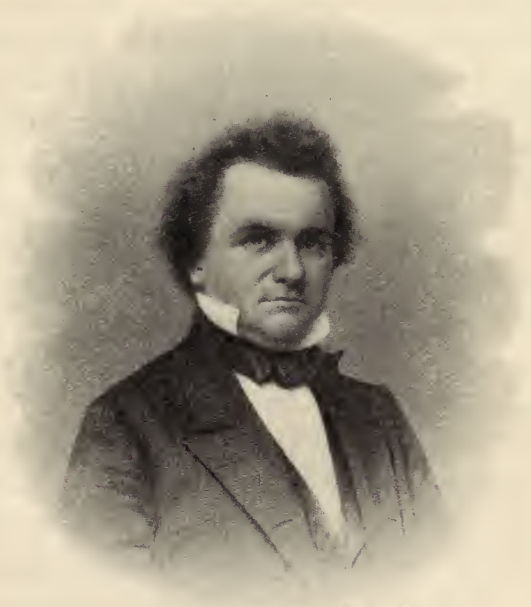
votes for Pierce and only forty-two for Scott, and this crushing defeat put an end to the Whig party. Its two great leaders, Webster and Clay, had just been removed by death. They were succeeded by such men as Sumner,

Seward, and Chase, declared enemies of slavery. Calhoun had also died, and a person of much smaller caliber, Jefferson Davis, succeeded him as leader of the slaveholders.

The slave power was now at its wits' end for new territory in which to extend itself. The stars in their courses had begun to fight against it. The admission of California gave the North a preponderance in the Senate; the wonderful growth of the northwestern states, in which the influence of New England ideas was steadily increasing, was giving it a preponderance in the lower house; and a time was likely to arrive when the South could no longer depend upon the aid of "doughface" presidents. It seemed necessary at once to get a new slave state to balance California, but the available land south of $36^{\circ} 30'$ was all used up. West of Arkansas lay the Indian Territory, while it was a long way across Texas to New Mexico; and on these lines the westward movement of white men was likely to advance too slowly. The impatience of the slave power vented itself but imperfectly

in secret and illegal filibustering expeditions against Cuba and some of the states of Central America. It was hoped that Cuba might be conquered and annexed as a slave state; but all these wild schemes failed, and Spain could not be persuaded to sell Cuba. A more practicable scheme seemed to be to get control of the territory lying west of Missouri and Iowa, and introduce slavery there. This land lay to the north of $36^{\circ} 30'$, and was therefore forever to be free soil, according to the terms of the Missouri Compromise. But with the aid of northern "doughfaces" the South might hope to obtain the repeal of that celebrated compact; and now once more its wishes were gratified, so far as mere legislation could go, but it soon became apparent that it was only sowing the wind to reap the whirlwind. The needed northern leader was found in Stephen Douglas, an Illinois Democrat, who hoped to become President. He maintained that the Compromise of 1850, by leaving the slavery question undetermined in New Mexico and Utah, had virtually repealed the Missouri

Compromise, and made it necessary to leave that question undetermined in the Kansas-



L. A. Douglass

Nebraska territory. There was no strict logic in this doctrine; for Kansas-Nebraska, being part of the Louisiana Purchase, was covered

by the Missouri Compromise, whereas New Mexico-Utah lay wholly outside the area contemplated in that agreement. But in the stress of political emergencies it is apt to fare ill with strict logic. In 1854 the Kansas-Nebraska bill was passed, reopening the slavery question in the lands west of Missouri and Iowa. This was substantially a repeal of the Missouri Compromise. It was a great and alarming concession to the slave power. Douglas and his followers intended it to insure peace, but its immediate consequence was the great Civil War.

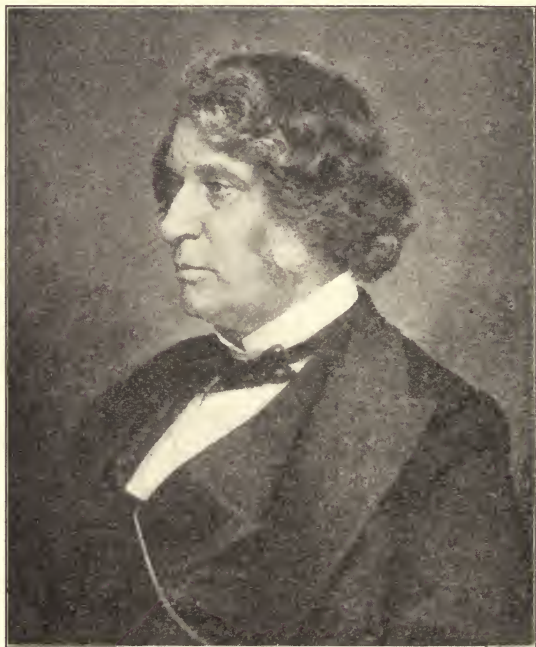
For according to Douglas' doctrine, which was known as "squatter sovereignty," it was now to be left to the settlers in Kansas and Nebraska whether they would have slavery or not. It was a plausible doctrine because it appealed to that strong love of local self-government which has always been one of the soundest political instincts of the American people. But its practical result was to create a furious rivalry between North and South as to which should get settlers enough

into Kansas to secure a majority of popular votes there. The issue, thus clearly defined, at once wrought a new division between political parties. In the autumn of 1854 all the northern men who were opposed to the extension of slavery, whatever their former party names might have been, combined together under the name of "Anti-Nebraska Men," and succeeded in electing a majority of the House of Representatives. Soon afterward they took the name of Republicans, and because of their alleged fondness for negroes, their scornful opponents called them "Black Republicans."

The course of westward migration now became determined by political reasons. Anti-slavery societies subscribed money to hasten immigration into Kansas, while Missouri and Arkansas poured in a gang of border ruffians to make life insecure for northern immigrants and deter them from coming. The plains of Kansas soon became the scene of wholesale robbery and murder. The preliminary phase of the Civil War had begun. A state of war

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existed in Kansas till 1858, when the tide of northern immigration had become so strong



Charles Sumner

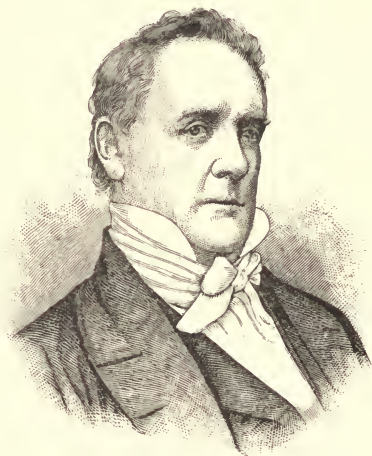
as to sweep away all obstacles and to decide that slavery should be forbidden there. Meanwhile the debates in Congress had grown so

fierce as to end in personal violence. In 1856 Charles Sumner made a speech which exasperated the slaveholders; and shortly afterward Preston Brooks, a representative from South Carolina, sought out Sumner while he was writing at his desk in the senate chamber, and beat him over the head with a stout cane until he had nearly killed him. An attempt was made to have Brooks expelled from Congress, but it failed of the requisite two-thirds vote. Brooks then resigned his seat and appealed to his constituents, who reëlected him to Congress by an almost unanimous vote, while many southern newspapers loudly applauded his conduct.

In the presidential campaign of 1856 the Democrats nominated a northern "doughface," James Buchanan, and indorsed the principle of squatter sovereignty; the Republicans nominated the western explorer Fremont, and asserted the right and duty of Congress to prohibit slavery in the territories, thus planting themselves upon the ground of the Wilmot Proviso. A small remnant of "doughface"

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Whigs nominated Fillmore, and tried to turn attention away from the great question at issue by protesting against the too hasty naturalization of foreign-born citizens. Buchanan



James Buchanan

obtained one hundred and seventy-four electoral votes, Fremont one hundred and fourteen, and Fillmore eight. The large Republican vote showed that the northern people were at last awakening to the danger, and it astonished and

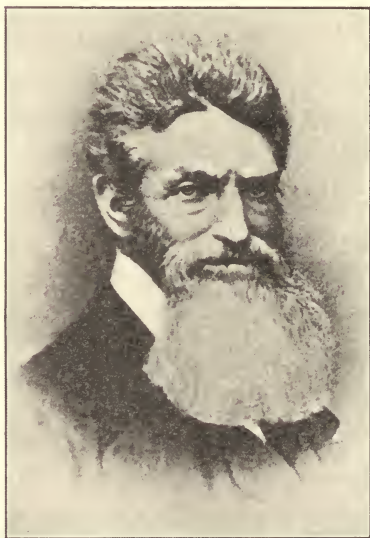
alarmed the South. The secessionist feeling was diligently encouraged by southern leaders who had political ends to subserve by it. The slave power became more aggressive than ever. The renewal of the African slave trade, which had been forbidden since 1808, was demanded; and without waiting for the question to be settled, the infamous traffic was resumed on a considerable scale and with scarcely any attempt at concealment. In the summer and autumn of 1857 the English fleet which watched the African coast, charged with the duty of suppressing the slave trade, captured twenty-two vessels engaged in this business, and all but one of these were American. By 1860 the trade had assumed large proportions, and was openly advertised in the southern newspapers. Not satisfied with this, the slaveholders strove to enlist the power of the Federal government in actively protecting their baneful institution. The principle of squatter sovereignty had not served their purpose, for they could not compete with the North in sending settlers to Kansas, and in

the struggle there they were already getting worsted. They accordingly threw squatter sovereignty to the winds and demanded that the Federal government should protect slavery in all the territories. The question was brought to the test in a case which was decided in the Supreme Court in 1857. Dred Scott, a slave who had been taken by his owner from Missouri into free territory, brought suit to obtain his freedom. Of the nine judges of the Supreme Court, five were slaveholders and some of the others were doughfaces. When the case was at last brought before them, it was decided that, according to the Constitution, slaves were not persons but property, and that slave owners could migrate from one part of the Union to another and take their negroes with them, just as they could take their horses and cows, or the bank notes in their waistcoat pockets. Two of the judges, Benjamin Curtis of Massachusetts and John McLean of Ohio, delivered dissenting opinions.

The revival of the African slave trade attracted little notice at the time, in comparison

with the Dred Scott decision. The effect of the two, taken together, would have been to drown the whole Union in a deluge of barbarism, to blight the growth of the American people both materially and morally, and to make us a nuisance in the eyes of the civilized world. The northern people refused to accept the verdict of the Supreme Court, and the northern Democrats, led by Douglas, became unwilling to coöperate any longer with the Democrats of the South. Some of them drifted into the Republican party, others tried to maintain the already effete principle of squatter sovereignty ; but nearly all were driven to the unwelcome conclusion that the day of compromises was gone. Thus North and South were at last definitely arrayed against each other, and the air was full of dismal forebodings of war. In the autumn of 1859 a blow was struck, slight enough in itself, but prophetic of the coming storm. John Brown, a Connecticut man of the old Puritan type, had been an antislavery leader in the Kansas fights. Now with fanatical

fervor he made up his mind to inaugurate a crusade against the slave power. With a handful of followers he attacked the arsenal



John Brown

at Harper's Ferry, in the hope of getting arms and setting up in the wild mountains of that neighborhood an asylum for fugitive slaves. He was, of course, captured and put

to death, but his daring act sounded the keynote of the approaching conflict. For that very reason he got at the moment but little sympathy in the North, where the Republican majority, content with the moderate policy of excluding slavery from the territories, were very unwilling to be considered allies of the extreme abolitionists, whom they regarded as disturbers of the peace.

In the presidential election of 1860 there were four candidates. The southern Democrats had separated from the northern Democrats, the Whig doughfaces were not yet extinct, while the Republicans were daily waxing in strength. The Republicans nominated Abraham Lincoln of Illinois, and declared that the Federal government must forbid slavery in the territories. The southern Democrats nominated John Breckenridge of Kentucky, and declared that the Federal government must protect slavery in the territories. These two parties had the courage of their convictions; the others shuffled, but in different ways.

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The northern Democrats, in nominating Douglas, took their stand upon a principle, though it was one that had already been



John C. Breckinridge.

proved inadequate; they left the question of slavery in each territory to be decided by the people who should settle in the territory;

but in order to catch southern votes, they made a concession similar to that which Clay had made in 1844, and vaguely announced themselves as willing to submit to the decision of the Supreme Court. This weakness, in presence of the Dred Scott verdict, gained them no votes at the South, where they could not outbid Breckenridge, and it lost them many votes at the North.

The still surviving remnant of doughface Whigs nominated John Bell of Tennessee, and declared themselves in favor of "the Constitution, the Union, and the enforcement of the laws," — a phrase which might mean almost anything. These good people were so afraid of war that they would fain keep the peace by shutting their eyes and persuading themselves that the terrible slavery question did not really exist, and that all would go well if men would only be good and kind to one another.

In the electoral college Lincoln obtained one hundred and eighty votes, Breckenridge seventy-two, Bell thirty-nine, and Douglas

twelve. The popular vote for Douglas was very large, but it was not so distributed as to gain a majority in any state except Missouri; besides the nine electoral votes of that state he obtained three in New Jersey. The result of the election was a decisive victory for the Republicans. Its significance was far-reaching. It not only meant the overthrow of the Dred Scott doctrine and squatter sovereignty, but it even went back of the Missouri Compromise, and put an immediate stop to the extension of slavery into the territories. It said not a word about the abolition of slavery in states where it already existed, but it meant that hereafter free labor was to have enormous room for expansion, while slave labor was to have none.

THE CIVIL WAR



THE CIVIL WAR

The North and South in 1860. Fort Sumter and Bull Run. Affair of the *Trent*. Success in the West. *Merrimac* and *Monitor*. McClellan in Virginia. Western campaigns. Emancipation of the slaves. The great crisis of the war. Chattanooga. Combined operations under Grant. End of the war.

The year of Lincoln's election was the census year in which the population of the United States first showed itself greater than that of its mother country. In 1776 the population of Great Britain and Ireland was about 8,000,000, and that of the United States about 3,000,000. In 1860 the population of Great Britain and Ireland was about 29,000,000, and that of the United States was over 31,000,000. The agricultural products of the United States far surpassed in volume those of any other country, and in merchant shipping we were second only to Great Britain,—a fact curious and sad to contemplate now, when our idiotic

navigation laws have succeeded in nearly destroying our merchant marine. Between 1830 and 1860 the growth of American civilization had been prodigious in all directions, — in facilities of travel and exchange, in home comforts, in manufactures, in literature and art, and, above all, in that awakening of moral sense which enabled us to pass unscathed through the terrible ordeal of the next four years.

In all this material and moral progress the South had by far the smaller share; not because of any natural inferiority in the people, but simply because of the curse of slavery, which blighted everything within its reach. Where labor was held in disrespect, as the mark of an inferior caste, immigration would not come; railroads, commerce, and manufactures would not thrive; ideas from other parts of the modern world were not kindly received; and the advance of civilization was accordingly checked. In 1860, besides their 4,000,000 negro slaves, the seceding states had a white population of about 4,000,000 with which to

contend against 23,000,000 at the North; and this enormous disparity was further increased by the still greater superiority of the North in material resources. The struggle of the South for four years against such odds showed of what heroic stuff its people were made; but they had also one great military advantage which went far toward neutralizing these odds. To win their independence it was not necessary for them to conquer the North or any part of it, but only to defend their own frontier; whereas, on the contrary, for the North to succeed, it was necessary for its armies to effect a military occupation of the whole vast southern country, and this was in some respects a greater military task than had ever been undertaken by any civilized government.

In planning secession the southern leaders realized how great this military advantage was, and they counted upon three other advantages, which, however, they failed to obtain. If they could have won these three other advantages, they might have succeeded

in establishing their independence. *First*, they expected that all the slave states would join in the secession movement, which was far from being the case. *Secondly*, they hoped that northern Democrats would offer such opposition to the Republican administration as to paralyze its action. In this they were sadly disappointed. As soon as it came to war, the great majority of northern Democrats loyally supported the government; and the party of obstructionists, known as "Peace Democrats," and nicknamed "copperheads," was too small to do much harm. *Thirdly*, the southern leaders hoped to get aid from England and France. They believed that the English manufactories were so dependent upon their cotton that the English government would not allow their coast to be blockaded. "Cotton is king," they said. Then the French emperor, Napoleon III, had designs upon Mexico that were incompatible with the Monroe doctrine, and he would be glad to see the power of the United States divided. In these hopes, too, they were disappointed.

Napoleon was desirous of recognizing the independence of the South, but unwilling to take such a step, save in concert with England,

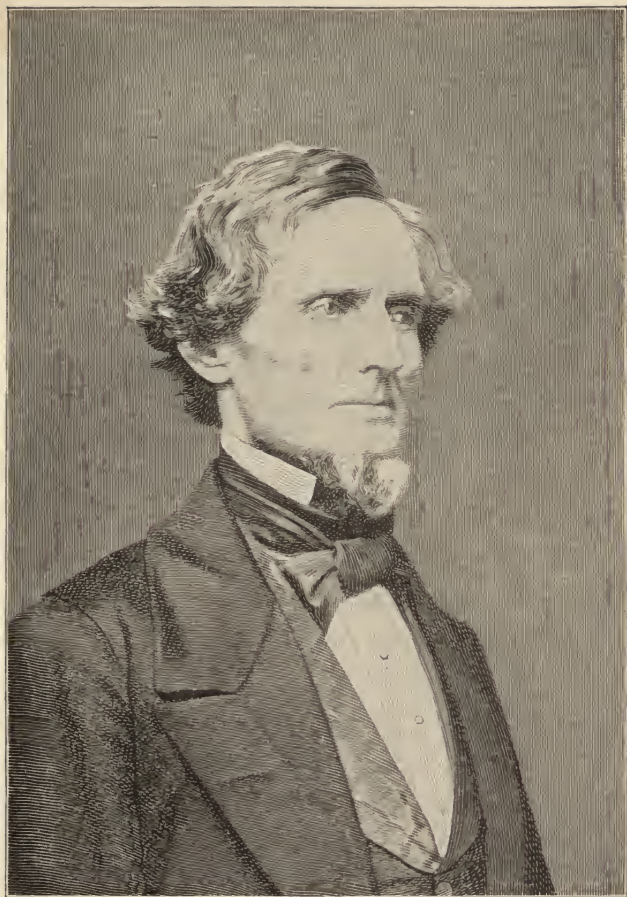


Louis Napoleon Bonaparte

and he was unable to persuade England. In the latter country there was much difference of sentiment, the working people mainly sympathizing with the North, and fashionable

society with the South; but in spite of great suffering from scarcity of cotton, the government could not, without glaring inconsistency, while suppressing the African slave trade with one hand, lend support to the principal slave power on earth with the other. The most it could do was to wink at the departure of a few blockade runners and privateers from British ports.

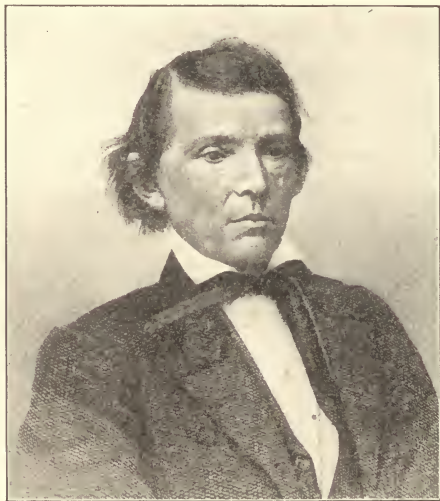
As soon as the election of 1860 showed that the slave power could no longer control the policy of the Federal Union, the state of South Carolina called a convention, which on the 20th December passed its ordinance of secession. Other states in which the secessionist party was not quite so strong now thought it necessary to stand by South Carolina, and in the course of January, 1861, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas passed ordinances of secession. The other slave states still held aloof, political opinions being much divided. In general their people disapproved of secession, but did not recognize the right of the Federal government



Jeffrey Davis

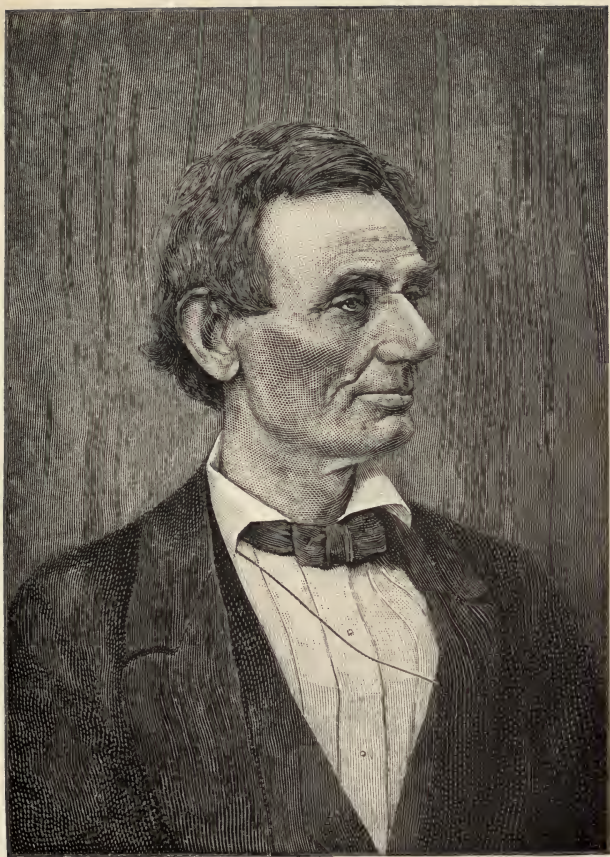
to defend itself by making war against the rebellion in a seceding state. This doctrine found expression in the annual message of President Buchanan, and his feeble attitude encouraged the seceders to believe that by a brave show of force they might succeed in effecting their purpose without war. In February, 1861, delegates from six of the seceding states met at Montgomery in Alabama, organized a government known as the "Confederate States of America," adopted a constitution, and chose Jefferson Davis for President and Alexander Stephens of Georgia for Vice President. Their term of office was to be six years. Many United States forts and arsenals were seized, but a few, and more particularly Fort Sumter, in Charleston harbor, held out. The South Carolinians prepared to attack Fort Sumter, and succeeded in preventing Buchanan's government from sending supplies thither. When Mr. Lincoln succeeded to office he sent a fleet to aid Fort Sumter; and as soon as the South Carolinians heard of this they fired upon the fortress and captured it

without bloodshed. This event aroused fierce excitement throughout the North, for it showed people what they had hitherto been extremely unwilling to believe, — that the South was



Alexander H. Stephens.

ready to fight, and could not be curbed without war. April 15, two days after the fall of Fort Sumter, the President called for 75,000 troops to put down the rebellion, and the



A. Lincoln



FORT SUMTER AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT

From a photograph

response was so hearty that within two months 200,000 men were under arms. The first blood was shed on the 19th, the anniversary of the battle of Lexington, when a Massachusetts regiment, hurrying to the defense of the Federal capital, was fired upon by a mob in Baltimore.

Many people in the border states were enraged by Mr. Lincoln's call for troops. The governors of Arkansas, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Virginia refused to obey, and those

states seceded from the Union and joined the Confederacy, but not with their full force. The people of the Allegheny mountains were loyal to the Union ; in eastern Tennessee they



MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, FEBRUARY 8, 1861

From a contemporary print

aided the Federals as far as possible ; in Virginia they seceded from their own state, and formed a new government, known as the state of West Virginia, which was afterward

admitted into the Union. Even thus curtailed, the accession of Virginia to the Confederacy increased its military strength enormously. Its capital was at once removed from Montgomery up to Richmond, and it became much



CONFEDERATE CAPITOL AT RICHMOND

From a print

easier to threaten Washington or to invade the North. Virginia was, besides, the greatest and richest of the slave states, and furnished the southern army with its ablest leaders, many of whom—such as Lee, Johnston,

Jackson, and Ewell — were opposed to secession, but thought it right to govern their own course by that of their state.

Immense consequences now hung upon the action of the other three border states. Missouri was the most powerful slave state except Virginia, and the geographical position of Missouri, Kentucky, and Maryland was of incalculable military importance. If these three states had joined the Confederacy, they might have turned the scale in its favor. Maryland remained firm through the steadfast loyalty of her governor and the presence of Federal troops. In Kentucky and Missouri, where the governments were disloyal, the situation soon became stormy and doubtful.

The first campaign east of the Mississippi was in West Virginia, from which the Confederate troops were driven in July by General McClellan. At the same time popular impatience prevailed upon General Scott to allow a premature and imprudent advance towards Richmond. On July 21 General McDowell had nearly accomplished the defeat



Gen. J. B. Johnston

of General Joseph Johnston in the battle of Bull Run, when fresh southern troops from the Shenandoah valley arrived upon the scene, and the Federals were put to flight. Until

this new arrival the forces were about equally matched in numbers. Some five thousand men were killed and wounded, so that it was the bloodiest battle that had yet been fought in America by white men; but its only military significance was that it made the South overconfident, while it nerved the North to greater efforts. Until the following spring there were no important operations in the East, except that Port Royal and a few other places on the coast were captured and held as convenient stations for the blockading fleet. The blockade was soon made effective along the whole length of the southern coast from the Potomac to the Rio Grande, an achievement which most people had thought impossible. The command of the Army of the Potomac was given to McClellan immediately after Bull Run, and in November he succeeded Scott as commander in chief of the Federal armies. He showed great skill in organizing the army, which, under his training, became an excellent instrument of warfare.

Toward the end of the year we came near getting into serious trouble with Great Britain.

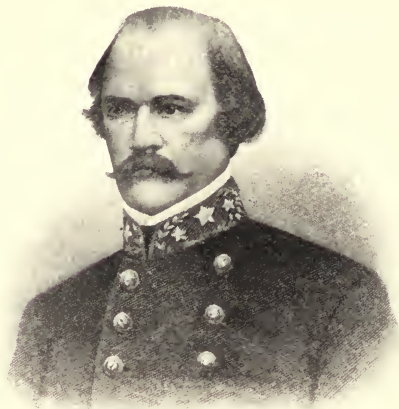
Two southern gentlemen, Mason and Slidell, were sent out by the Confederacy as commissioners to England and France to seek aid from those powers. They ran the blockade, and at Havana took passage for England in the *Trent*, a British steamer. Some distance out the *Trent* was overhauled by an American war vessel under Captain Wilkes, and the two Confederate agents were taken out and carried to Boston harbor, where they were imprisoned in Fort Warren. This was an exercise of the right of search which the United States government had always condemned, and to put an end to which it had gone to war with Great Britain in 1812. The right had been relinquished by Great Britain in 1856. It was impossible for the United States to uphold the act of Captain Wilkes without deserting the principles which it had always maintained. Mr. Lincoln therefore promptly disavowed the act and surrendered the prisoners, although such a course was made needlessly difficult for him by the blustering behavior of the British government, which had immediately begun

to threaten war and get troops ready to send to Canada.

In Missouri the secessionist party was very strong, and controlled the state government; but it was completely defeated by the boldness and sagacity of Francis Blair and Nathaniel Lyon, who in May and June, 1861, overturned the government and set up a loyal one in its place. The prompt action of these two men saved Missouri to the Union. After a brief career of victory Lyon was defeated and killed, August 10, in a severe battle at Wilson's Creek. The Confederates gained little from their slight success and their hold grew weaker, until, in March, 1862, they were thoroughly and decisively defeated at Pea Ridge, in Arkansas, by General Curtis.

Meanwhile in Kentucky the state government had begun by trying to maintain an impossible attitude of neutrality, but the Union sentiment grew stronger and stronger, until in September the Confederate general, Polk, invaded Kentucky and occupied the bluffs at Columbus, blocking the descent of

the Mississippi river. Kentucky now declared for the Union, and General Grant entered the state from Illinois and anticipated Polk in securing the mouths of the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers, two great streams which were to serve as military highways by which the Union armies were to penetrate into the heart of the Confederacy. This was for Grant the beginning of a long and successful, though fiercely contested, advance. The Confederates had set up a defensive line from Columbus on the Mississippi river to Cumberland Gap in the Alleghenies, and placed in command of it Sidney Johnston, an officer of high reputation. His headquarters were at Bowling Green, and he was confronted by a Federal army under General Buell. This was the middle one of the three great Federal armies and came to be known as the Army of the Cumberland. The center of the Confederate line was at Forts Henry and Donelson, strongholds intended to bar the ascent of the two great rivers. This center was confronted by Grant with troops which presently formed the western



A. S. Johnston

one of the three great Federal armies and was known as the Army of the Tennessee. The right of the Confederate line was at Millspring, and in January it was thoroughly defeated by the extreme left division of Buell's army under General Thomas. In February, aided by the river fleet, Grant captured Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, taking fifteen thousand prisoners and breaking through the center of the Confederate line. Johnston and Polk were



U. I. Grant

now obliged to retreat for fear of being cut off. Kentucky was secured to the Union and the greater part of Tennessee recovered. Andrew Johnson was appointed military governor of the state.

The Confederates set up their second defensive line along the railroad from Memphis to Chattanooga and began massing their forces on this line at Corinth. The armies of Grant and Buell advanced to attack them there. Both these armies were now moving under the directions of General Halleck, who was intending to come from St. Louis and take command in the field. Before he arrived there was a great battle. Grant was at Pittsburg Landing on the west bank of the Tennessee river, about twenty miles from Corinth, awaiting the arrival of Buell's army. Johnston moved to attack and crush him there before the junction of the armies could be effected. There ensued on April 6 and 7 the battle of Shiloh, in which nearly one hundred thousand men were engaged, and lost one fourth of their number in killed and wounded. Johnston,

who was one of the slain, came near effecting his purpose, but Grant's resistance was stubborn, and at the close of the first day three divisions of Buell's army came upon the scene, so that next day the Confederates were defeated. This battle decided the fate of Corinth, which, however, did not fall for several weeks, because the incapable Halleck now took command of the Federals.

While these things were going on the Federal fleet under Farragut captured New Orleans and laid open the Mississippi river up to Vicksburg; and the river fleet, at first with the aid of a small army under Pope, captured Island Number 10 and then annihilated the Confederate river fleet at Memphis. The fall of that city and of Corinth broke down the second Confederate line of defense and laid open Vicksburg on the one hand and Chattanooga on the other to the attack of the Federals. Thus the first year of active warfare in the West, from June, 1861, to June, 1862, was an almost unbroken career of victory for the Federal armies. To complete the conquest of the

Mississippi it was necessary to take Vicksburg, and its outpost, Port Hudson, which between



D. E. Farragut

them commanded the mouth of the Red river, and thus kept open the communications of

the eastern part of the Confederacy with its states of Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas. To take Vicksburg would lop off these states and inflict an irreparable damage upon the fighting power of the Confederacy. While this object was so important, it was scarcely less important for the Federals to hold Chattanooga, and thus open the way into Georgia, while preventing the Confederates from recovering any of the lost ground in Tennessee. But Halleck was unequal to the situation; and while he failed to seize Vicksburg, which the Confederates soon made one of the most formidable strongholds in the world, he also failed to seize Chattanooga.

The great river fights at New Orleans and Memphis showed that one of the Confederacy's chief sources of weakness lay in its naval inferiority; but before these fights it had seemed for a moment as if it might be going to become formidable on the water after all. The Confederates took the United States frigate *Merrimac* at Norfolk Navy Yard, and transformed her into an ironclad ram with sloping sides and huge iron beak. The United



J. Ericsson

States had in Hampton Roads a fleet of five of the finest wooden war ships in the world. On the 8th of March, 1862, this fleet was wretchedly defeated by the *Merrimac*. Their shot bounded harmlessly from her sides, while she sank one of the ships with her beak and might very likely have sunk them all had not darkness stopped the fight. But John Ericsson, the inventor of the screw propeller, had

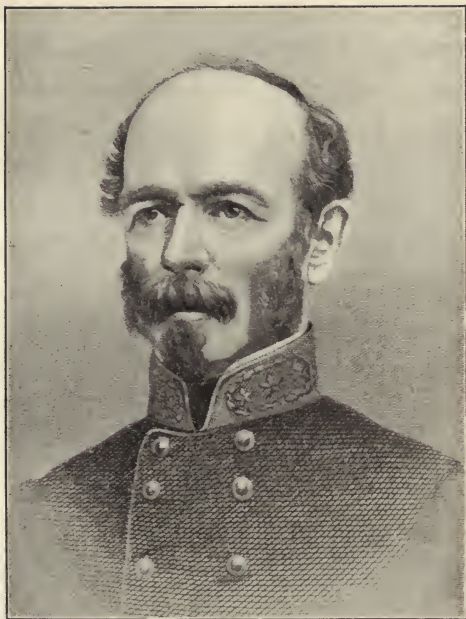
lately completed his invention of the turret ship; and a few hours after the *Merrimac's* victory, the first vessel of this class, the famous *Monitor*, appeared in Hampton Roads. Next day she had an obstinate fight with the *Merrimac* and compelled her to retire from the scene, though she could not destroy her. The immediate effect of this naval battle was to render antiquated all the most recently built ships then existing in all the navies of the world. The naval superiority of the North was no more interrupted, and Federal fleets supported by small armies went on seizing the chief harbors on the southern coast until by the end of the war they possessed them all.

The eastern campaigns were not so successful as the western, partly because the Confederate generals were much abler as compared with their antagonists, partly because military affairs were too much mixed up with politics. In advancing upon Richmond, McClellan thought it wisest to start by sea and proceed up the bank of the James river; but the government wished him to march directly across

*J.C. Fremont.*

Virginia, in order to keep his army always interposed between the enemy and Washington. McClellan's objection to this course was that the nature of the country offered the enemy a series of immensely strong defensive lines which could be carried only at a terrible

cost of life. He was at length allowed to follow the James river route, but his plan was hampered in a way that ruined it without protecting Washington. Part of his army under McDowell was sent by the direct route to Fredericksburg, and in order to keep his right wing within coöperating distance of it, he was obliged to move, not close by the James river, but by the Chickahominy, with his base of supplies on the York river. Small Union forces under Banks and Fremont were also kept in and about the Shenandoah valley. These arrangements were liable to prove very disastrous if turned to account by skillful adversaries. McClellan justly complained that his plans were so interfered with as never to have left him a fair chance. At the same time he seems to have been very far indeed from making the best use of the opportunities within his reach. At first the Confederates kept him a month besieging Yorktown, which they then abandoned, and retired into the neighborhood of Richmond. In advancing, the need for keeping his right wing thrown

*J. E. Johnston*

out toward McDowell brought McClellan into an awkward position astride of the Chickahominy river, which by a sudden rise nearly severed the two halves of the army. At the end of May the Confederates pounced upon

one half at Fair Oaks, and in a hard-fought battle it barely saved itself. Joseph Johnston was here wounded and his place was taken by Robert Lee, who at once called back the famous "Stonewall" Jackson from the Shenandoah valley. Jackson had totally defeated the forces there and created such a panic in Washington that McDowell's force was withdrawn for the defense of the capital. McClellan now decided to change his base from the York river to the James and thus secure a much better position. But before he had effected the change Jackson had returned from the Shenandoah, and the united Confederate army hurled itself upon McClellan in the hope of crushing him while making the change. After seven days of hard fighting, June 26 to July 1, with a loss of fifteen thousand men on each side, Lee was driven off and McClellan reached the James river, in a position where he was more dangerous to Richmond than before.

Meanwhile the scattered forces between Washington and Richmond were put in

command of John Pope, against whom Lee presently sent Jackson. Now Halleck, who had been brought to Washington and made



John Pope

commander in chief, stupidly played into the enemy's hands by removing McClellan's army from the vicinity of Richmond and bringing it around by sea to unite with Pope. Lee's

hands being left quite free by this clumsy movement, he forthwith joined Jackson and inflicted an ignominious defeat upon Pope at Bull Run, August 29. The capital was threatened ; the country wild with excitement. To screen Pope, charges of misconduct and disobedience were brought against one of his ablest officers, Fitz John Porter, who was found guilty and dismissed from the army. The charges were afterward proved to have been groundless, and after a quarter of a century, in spite of the shameful resistance of political partisans, General Porter was restored to his rank in the army.

After the overthrow of Pope, the Confederates pushed on into Maryland, and McClellan again commanded the Federals. At Antietam, on the 17th of September, a great battle was fought between 40,000 Confederates under Lee and 60,000 Federals under McClellan, who had about 25,000 more troops unused. Each side lost about 12,500 men, and at the end the advantage was slightly with the Federals. Lee retreated slowly into Virginia,

followed by McClellan, who was blamed for not accomplishing more. Early in November he was superseded by Burnside, who accomplished still less.



W. W. Healy

In June, 1862, the great Union force at Corinth was divided, Buell's army marching eastward to seize Chattanooga, while Grant's remained about Corinth till it should be ready

to start for Vicksburg. The campaign was so badly managed by Halleck that the Confederates, under Bragg, seized Chattanooga before Buell's arrival, and were thus enabled



D. C. Buell

to bring such pressure to bear in that direction that heavy reënforcements had to be sent from Grant to Buell. Thus weakened, Grant was unable to advance for several months. Meanwhile, Bragg took advantage of his

superior position to strike across Tennessee and invade Kentucky in two columns, one directed against Buell's base at Louisville, the other one moving through Cumberland Gap toward



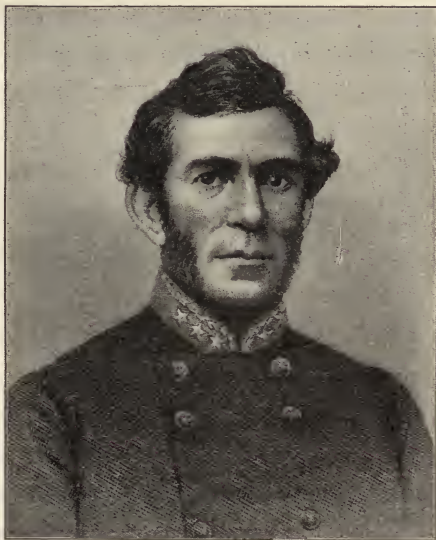
W. A. Rorer

Cincinnati. This bold movement, occurring simultaneously with Lee's invasion of Maryland, served to alarm the North, but the Confederates failed to recover any of the ground

they had lost. Buell's movements were made with great skill, and after a bloody and indecisive battle between parts of the armies at Perryville, October 8, Bragg retreated through Cumberland Gap and made his way back to Chattanooga.

While these things were going on, the Confederate army in Mississippi, under Van Dorn, made a desperate attempt to turn Grant's left wing at Corinth, so as to force him back down the Tennessee river. That wing was commanded by Rosecrans, who defeated the Confederates at Iuka, September 19, and Corinth, October 3 and 4, and foiled their scheme. Soon after this Rosecrans superseded Buell in the command of the Army of the Cumberland. Bragg had advanced to Murfreesboro, and at Stone river, near that town, a battle occurred, December 31 to January 2, in which 40,000 men were engaged on each side, and each lost more than 10,000. Bragg was obliged to retreat to Tullahoma; but the battle decided nothing except that it is very hard for Americans to defeat Americans,—a point that was fully

illustrated in the course of this war. By this time Grant had begun his first movement against Vicksburg, and met with his first repulse; his communications were cut in his



GENERAL BRAGG

rear, and his ablest lieutenant, Sherman, was defeated, December 29, in an assault upon the bluffs north of the town.

Since the South had brought on this war in defense of slavery, the abolitionist

sentiment had grown very rapidly at the North, and it had now become supported by the military needs of the hour. The summer's events had shown that the war was not likely soon to be ended; and there was some fear lest England, through distress from the scarcity of cotton, should join with France in an attempt to bring it prematurely to a close. It was also the clear dictate of common sense that in waging such a terrible and costly war the earliest opportunity should be taken of striking at the cause of the war; otherwise victory, even when won, could not be final, but the seeds of future disease would be left in the body politic. The part which Mr. Lincoln played at this crisis was that of a bold and farsighted statesman, and entitles him to rank by the side of Washington in the grateful memories of the American people. The Constitution gave him no authority to abolish slavery, but there was a broad principle of military law that did. In 1836 John Quincy Adams had declared in Congress that, if ever the slave states should become

the theater of war, the government might interfere with slavery in any way that military policy might suggest. Again, in his speech of April 14, 1842, he said, in words of prophetic clearness: "Whether the war be civil, servile, or foreign, I lay this down as the law of nations: I say that the military authority takes for the time the place of all municipal institutions, slavery among the rest. Under that state of things, so far from its being true that the states where slavery exists have the exclusive management of the subject, not only the President of the United States, but the commander of the army, has power to order the universal emancipation of slaves." It was upon this theory that Mr. Lincoln acted. In announcing it, he seized the favorable moment when the tide of southern invasion had begun to roll back from Maryland and Kentucky, and on September 22, 1862, issued a preliminary proclamation to the effect that on the following New Year's Day, in all such states as had not by that time returned to their allegiance, the slaves

should be henceforth and forever free. This did not affect the slaves in the loyal border states, who were left to be set free by other measures; but it practically settled the question that the reëstablishment of the authority of the United States government would be attended by the final abolition of slavery. For a moment it seemed as if the proclamation had weakened the Republican vote, but it really added incalculable strength to the administration; and as for foreign intervention, it made it almost impossible, owing to Great Britain's attitude toward slavery.

The first half of the year 1863 was a gloomy time, for it was not enough that the Federal government should hold its own; it must make progress, and no progress seemed to be made. Grant found himself baffled all winter by the almost insoluble problem how to invest Vicksburg. In May, in one of the most brilliant campaigns recorded in history, he won five battles and laid close siege to that stronghold; but the full measure of his success was not yet reached, and the people were

disheartened by defeat in other quarters. In middle Tennessee, Bragg and Rosecrans held each other in check till the middle of June.

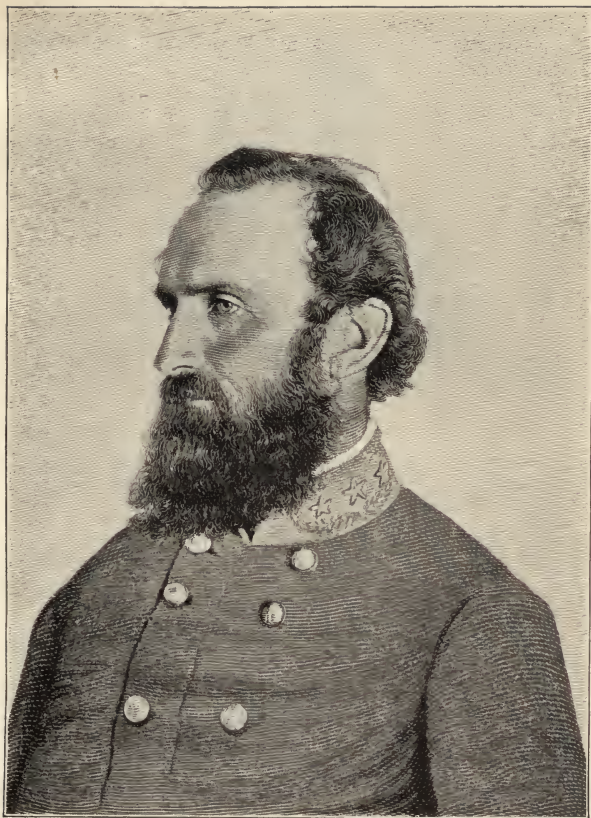


J. Hooker

In Virginia the incompetent Burnside had been terribly defeated by Lee at Fredericksburg, December 13, with a loss of more than 12,000 men. He was superseded by Joseph Hooker,

from whose admirable conduct in subordinate positions great hopes were now entertained. But at Chancellorsville, May 1 to 4, Lee won the most brilliant of all his victories. With 45,000 men, against Hooker's 90,000, he succeeded in maintaining a superiority of numbers at each contested point, until he forced his adversary from the field. Lee's loss was 12,000; Hooker's was 16,000; but the Confederates also lost "Stonewall" Jackson, a disaster so great as to balance the victory.

Lee now played a grand but desperate game, and, turning Hooker's right flank, pushed on through the western part of Maryland into Pennsylvania, so as to threaten Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington. There was intense alarm at the North. The Army of the Potomac was moved northward to cover the cities just mentioned, and Hooker was superseded in the command by Meade. The two armies came into collision at Gettysburg, where in a tremendous battle, July 1 to 3, Meade at length succeeded in defeating Lee. About 82,000 Federals and 74,000



T. J. Jackson

(“STONEWALL” JACKSON)



Gen. G. Meade

Confederates were engaged; the loss of the former was 24,000; of the latter, 30,000. That is, out of 156,000 men the loss was 54,000, or more than one third; so that the battle of Gettysburg was one of the greatest of modern times. It marked the turning point of the Civil War, but it was not in itself a decisive victory, like Blenheim or Waterloo. Lee moved slowly back to his old position on the Rapidan, where he and Meade held each other in check until the following spring.

On the next day after Gettysburg a much more decisive triumph was won by Grant in the capture of Vicksburg with its whole army of defense, nearly thirty-two thousand strong. This was the heaviest blow that had yet been dealt to the Confederacy; its whole western zone was now virtually conquered, and it became possible to concentrate greater forces against its middle and eastern zones. The news of Gettysburg and Vicksburg made the Fourth of July, 1863, a day of rejoicing at the North, albeit of mourning in thousands of bereaved homes. The next note of victory was sounded on Thanksgiving Day.

Late in June Rosecrans began a series of skillful movements against Bragg, which caused him to fall back into Chattanooga. Early in September, by moving against his communications, Rosecrans forced him to evacuate that place; but in maneuvering among the mountains the Union general suddenly discovered that he had misinterpreted his adversary's movements and thus had dangerously extended his own lines.

*Geo. A. Thomas*

While thereupon engaged in concentrating his forces upon Chattanooga, he was attacked by Bragg, who had meanwhile been heavily reënforced from Virginia. A terrible battle was fought September 19 and 20, in Chickamauga valley, between 55,000 Federals and 70,000 Confederates, in which each side lost one third of its number. After an extraordinary series of mishaps had led to the total rout of the Federal right wing, the army was saved by the magnificent skill and bravery of

Thomas, who commanded on the left. Rosecrans occupied Chattanooga, but in such a plight that he seemed in danger of losing it and his army also. He was besieged by Bragg, who occupied the strong positions of Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, commanding the town. In October Rosecrans was superseded by Thomas, and Grant was put in command of all the armies between the Mississippi and the Alleghenies. Reënforcements under Hooker were sent from Virginia, and Sherman came up from Vicksburg with a large part of the Army of Tennessee. In the brilliant battle of Chattanooga, November 24 and 25, the Confederates were totally defeated, and Grant won another prize of scarcely less value than Vicksburg. The area of the Confederacy was now virtually cut down to the four states of Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia.

In March, 1864, Grant superseded Halleck as commander in chief, with the rank of lieutenant general. Grant now gave his personal supervision to the Army of the Potomac, while

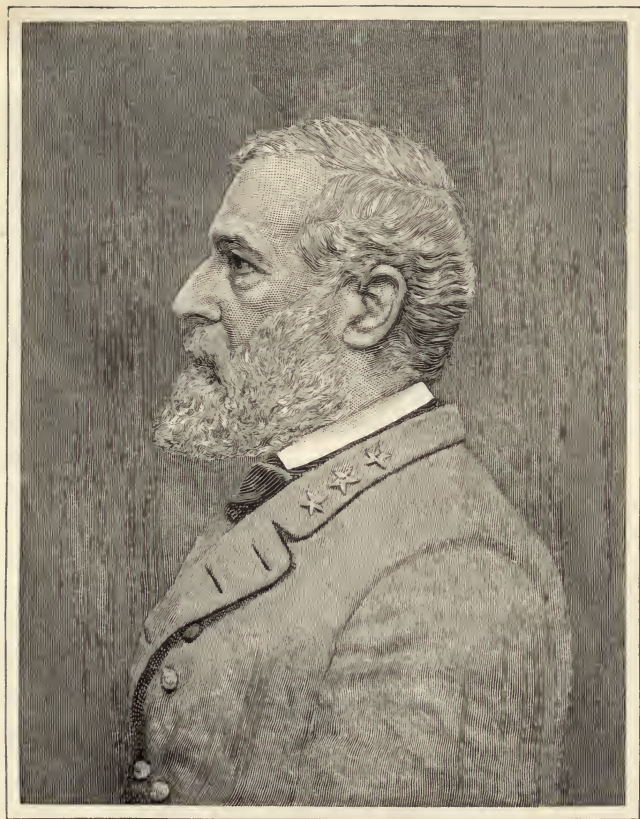


W. T. Sherman

retaining Meade in immediate command. After the battle of Chattanooga the defeated Confederates had retired to Dalton, in Georgia, where Bragg was superseded by Johnston. The Union army opposed to Johnston was commanded by Sherman, and early in May a simultaneous forward movement was begun in Georgia and in Virginia.

Grant had won his great victories at Vicksburg and Chattanooga not by hard pounding

so much as by skillful strategy. Twice at Vicksburg he had tried the hammering process without success. In Virginia, having an immense superiority in numbers (122,000 against 62,000), he at first tried to crush Lee by simple hammering. In pursuing the direct route through Fredericksburg to Richmond, he encountered a series of strong defensive positions of which Lee availed himself with consummate skill. In assaulting these positions, Grant generally failed; but his superiority in numbers enabled him to operate against Lee's right flank and slowly push him back to the Chickahominy. After a month of this terrible warfare, including the battles of the Wilderness, Spottsylvania, and Cold Harbor, Grant had lost sixty-four thousand men, or more than the whole army with which Lee started. Having now reached the Chickahominy, and finding it impossible to break through Lee's lines of defense, Grant changed his plan of campaign and swung round upon Petersburg to operate against the southern communications of Richmond.



R Lee

Here Lee succeeded in holding him at bay for nine months, with forces constantly weakening. Grant's losses could be repaired, but Lee's could not.

The North, indeed, was still rich and flourishing, while the Confederacy was at the end of its resources. The food supply from the West was cut off, clothes and tools were giving out, and the blockade was stricter than ever. Farragut's great victory in Mobile bay closed up that entrance in August, while on the ocean the chief Confederate cruisers were captured. One of these cases, the destruction of the famous *Alabama* in June by the *Kearsarge*, off the coast of France, was especially interesting, as the *Alabama* was British-built and manned by British seamen and gunners, and the contest seemed to teach a similar lesson to those of 1812. The guns of the *Kearsarge* sent her to the bottom in an hour.

Sherman's campaign in Georgia revealed the exhausted condition of the Confederacy. He advanced from Chattanooga with 100,000 men against Johnston's weaker force of 75,000,

and by a series of skillful flank movements pushed him back upon Atlanta after three battles, — at Resaca, Dallas, and Kenesaw Mountain, — in which the Federals lost altogether about 14,000 men and the Confederates about 11,000. Johnston's conduct had been extremely skillful, but he was now removed from command. His successor, Hood, believed in hard blows, and soon received some in two fierce sorties from Atlanta, July 22 and 28, in which he lost 13,000 men to Sherman's 4000. On September 2 Sherman took Atlanta. Hood now made a fatal mistake. He moved northwestward by Tuscumbia and Florence into middle Tennessee, thinking that Sherman would follow him. But instead Sherman divided his army, sending back part of it under Thomas to deal with Hood, while he himself prepared to continue his advance through Georgia. Hood, moving northward, was first defeated at Franklin, November 30, with heavy loss, by Schofield. Then Hood encountered Thomas in a great battle at Nashville, December 15 and 16. Hood had about 44,000 men, Thomas



GENERAL HOOD

about 56,000. The Federals lost about 3000 men; the Confederates were totally defeated, with a loss of 15,000, and in the pursuit which followed, their army ceased to exist. Of all the battles fought in the course of the war, this was the most completely a victory. Meanwhile Sherman started from Atlanta about the middle of November, with 60,000 men marched unopposed through Georgia to the seacoast, and captured Savannah December 21. Throughout the North congratulations over

these remarkable campaigns mingled with the Christmas greetings.

The foregoing survey shows the Union arms as having advanced from the beginning with remarkable steadiness and rapidity toward the overthrow of the Confederacy; but very few people were able to see this until after it was all over. These four years seemed very long while they were passing, and as people were always hoping for a colossal blow which would at once end the war, they failed to take account of the steady progress which was really being made. Besides this, the operations near Washington naturally assumed more prominence in people's eyes than the western operations, and here the prolonged resistance of Lee served further to confuse the popular estimate of passing events. Lee's defensive warfare was one of the most wonderful things in history, and imposed upon people's imaginations till they were almost ready to forget that even he could not hold out indefinitely, without a Confederacy behind him. Even in the summer of 1864 Lee was able to alarm

the government at Washington by sending the gallant Early on an expedition down the Shenandoah valley, like that which Jackson had conducted two years before. In a very



Phil. H. Sheridan

able and romantic campaign Sheridan completely defeated Early; but the impression produced upon the northern mind was great. In the nominating conventions held in the

course of the summer, between the battle of Spottsylvania and Sherman's capture of Atlanta, the Republicans nominated Lincoln for reëlection; but some radical Republicans, who condemned his measures as too feeble, nominated Fremont, and the Democrats, with scarcely less absurdity, in nominating McClellan, demanded that peace should be made on the ground that the war was a failure. Before the election Fremont withdrew his name. McClellan obtained twenty-one electoral votes from New Jersey, Delaware, and Kentucky; the two hundred and twelve votes of the other states not in rebellion were given to Lincoln.

Early in 1865 the Confederacy fell so suddenly that it seemed like the collapse of a bubble. The year opened auspiciously with Schofield's capture of Wilmington, the last Confederate port except Charleston, which fell as soon as Sherman's northward march began. He advanced through the Carolinas, partly over the same route taken by Cornwallis in 1781. From various quarters Johnston contrived to gather forty thousand men to oppose

him, but was defeated near Goldsborough, March 19. By this time Lee had made up his mind to abandon Petersburg and Richmond, move by way of Danville, and effect a junction with Johnston. To prevent such a concentration of forces Grant moved Sheridan southwesterly to Five Forks, upon Lee's right or southern flank. Here Sheridan in the last battle of the war secured his position. To avoid being outflanked Lee was forced to lengthen his line, already too weak; and now Grant with a hundred thousand men broke through it. The Confederate government fled from Richmond, and Lee, driven westward, was headed off at Appomattox Courthouse, where on April 9 he surrendered his army, now reduced to twenty-six thousand men. A fortnight later Johnston surrendered to Sherman and the war was ended. Never was an overthrow more complete and final than that of the Confederacy, and never had soldiers fought more gallantly than those who were now surrendered. All were at once set free on parole, and no dismal executions for

treason were allowed to sully the glorious triumph of the United States. The public rejoicings were clouded by the death of the wise and gentle Lincoln, struck down in the moment of victory by the hand of a wretched assassin. His name will forever be remembered side by side with the name of Washington; for he was in many ways the second founder of the United States. The work of unparalleled glory begun by Washington — of founding a nation so peaceful and so mighty that, through its own peaceful development, it might by and by sow broadcast over the world the seeds of permanent peace among men — was brought to its next stage of completion by Lincoln. So long as the chief source of contention remained, the future might well seem doubtful. The work of 1776 first came to full fruition in 1865; and when this is duly considered, it reveals the moral grandeur of American history and suggests lessons which we shall all do well to learn.

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